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ABSTRACT

Approximately 9,500 stakeholders in school-business partnerships in Alberta (including representatives of key business/education associations, school boards, and schools; a sample of businesses with some involvement in school-business partnerships; and a random sample of 3,000 employers) were surveyed regarding their views on business involvement in education. The 795 respondents (response rate, 8.4%) characterized themselves as follows: employers, 42%; educators, 28%; members of the public, 15%, and high school students, 15%. The general consensus was that students are not well prepared for entry into the work force and that employers must work together to articulate their expectations regarding competencies required of high school completers. Eighty percent of the employers and 68% of the educators felt that employers should be more extensively involved in education. Sixty-six percent of educators and 72% of employers wanted more government involvement in education. Nearly two-thirds of respondents wanted employers represented on provincial boards/agencies addressing education curricula. (Twenty-six tables/figures are included. Appended are the following: selected general comments made by respondents; summary of written submissions to the survey team; profile of employer respondents; and survey instrument. Also included is a technical appendix that contains the survey questionnaire and a detailed breakdown of responses to all questions.) (MN)

ED 399 388

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION: PUBLIC CONSULTATION FINDINGS

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Prepared For

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by

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- *Business Involvement in Education Literature Review*
- *Creating Independent and Interdependent Learners: Business and Education Working Together*
- *Framework for Enhancing Business Involvement in Education*
- *Partnerships Survey Report, 1995: School–Business Partnerships in Alberta*
- *Proceedings Report: Invitational Forum on Business Involvement in Education*
- *Technical Appendix Business Involvement in Education: Public Consultation Findings*

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B.	Summary of Written Submissions to the MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration in Education
C.	Profile of Employer Respondents
D.	Survey Instrument

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In November, 1994, Education Minister Halvor Jonson appointed a Business Involvement Advisory Group consisting of business and educational stakeholders to assist the MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration to: 1) identify issues associated with the preparation of students for work and the involvement of business in education; 2) seek public input in respect of the identified issues as well as some possible policy alternatives to address the issues; and, 3) prepare recommendations for improving the education system in Alberta through a strengthening of the relationship between the business and education sectors in the province.

Nichols Education Consulting Group was engaged in February, 1995 to assist the Business Involvement Advisory Group to acquire and synthesize the views of a broad cross-section of members of Alberta's business and education communities on a range of matters relating to the preparation of students for work and the involvement of business in education. The firm was also requested to undertake a review of the literature to identify the approaches being taken in other jurisdictions to strengthen the linkages between the business and education sectors.

This report presents the findings from the public consultation process that was undertaken as part of this project. The results of the literature review are contained in a separate report.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Nichols Education Consulting Group worked with the Business Involvement Advisory Group to identify and assess alternative approaches to elicit the views of the broad range of stakeholders in the province who have an interest in the involvement of business and education as partners in our province's education system. An initial discussion guide was analyzed by the consulting team, reviewed by approximately 80 individuals identified as having an interest in the work of the MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration, and examined critically during preliminary stakeholder focus group sessions to determine if it addressed the most relevant issues and if it would be suitable for acquiring the views of the various stakeholders.

On the basis of the feedback received on the initial discussion paper, the Business Involvement Advisory Group decided to administer a questionnaire consisting of both open-ended and closed questions and the consultants worked with the Group to design and pre-test a questionnaire.

The questionnaire, together with a covering letter from the Minister of Education, a brief appendix that provided some background information about a number of the issues addressed in the questionnaire, and the results of a survey about school-business partnerships conducted by Alberta Education in the spring of 1995 was distributed at the beginning of October. Approximately 9,500 stakeholders, including key business and education associations, all school boards and schools in the province, a sample of businesses known to have had some previous involvement in school-business partnerships, and a random sample of 3,000 employers in the province -- including employers in both the private and public sectors -- received the questionnaire. Individuals and groups were also invited to prepare written submissions for the consideration of the MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration in Education.

Nichols Education Consulting Group presented the preliminary survey findings based on the responses received by November 5 at the meeting of the Business Involvement Advisory Group on November 17, 1995 and requested guidance from the members in regard to any additional analysis of the survey data.

A total of 795 completed questionnaires were received by the extended deadline of November 24 which resulted in an 8.4% response rate. A high proportion of the respondents added additional written comments in the spaces provided in the questionnaire and these comments are presented as appropriate in the main body of this report. The general comments provided by respondents on the questionnaire are contained in Appendix A. In addition, thirteen briefs were received. A summary of the written submissions is contained in Appendix B.

Table 1 presents a summary of the survey responses. The respondents have been categorized in accordance with the way that they identified themselves and completed the questionnaire.

TABLE 1
Summary of Survey Responses

Respondent Category	Number	Percentage
Employers	333	42%
Educators	225	28%
Public	116	15%
High School Students	121	15%
TOTAL	795	100%

Due to the low response rate from the random sample of employers, (5%), and the fact that the employers identified as having participated in previous school-business partnerships were not randomly-selected, the views of the employer respondents cannot be interpreted as being representative of the views of employers, generally, in the province.

Appendix C presents profile information on the employers that participated in this survey.

The responses to the open-ended questions were coded as necessary, entered into computer files, and tabulated. The survey results were then analyzed to identify any differences in opinion among the different respondent groups and among respondents with different attributes (e.g. employers that had participated in school-business partnerships, respondents from communities of different sizes, etc.). To the extent that the cross-tabulations revealed statistically significant differences in opinions among respondent groups, this is indicated in the report.

This report presents the essential findings of the survey. The detailed survey results and a copy of the survey questionnaire are contained in a separate technical appendix.

2. FINDINGS

The questionnaire administered as part of the consultation process pursued by the MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration and the Business Involvement Advisory Group focused on the following:

- The preparation of students for employment;
- Communication and understanding between employers and educators;
- Whether employers should be more involved in education, the type of involvement that employers would like to have in education, how employer involvement might be coordinated, and the concerns of employers and educators about greater involvement of employers in education;
- The part-time employment of students;
- Whether schools should become involved in assisting employers; and,
- Whether the government should attempt to encourage employers to become more involved in education and the appropriateness of alternative approaches for strengthening the relationship between employers and the education sector in Alberta.

2.1 THE PREPARATION OF STUDENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT

Respondents were asked their opinion about the preparation of students who complete high school for entry into the work force. Figure 1 presents the opinions of all respondents about the competencies of students who have completed high school and are entering the work force in the following areas:

- communications skills;
- thinking skills;

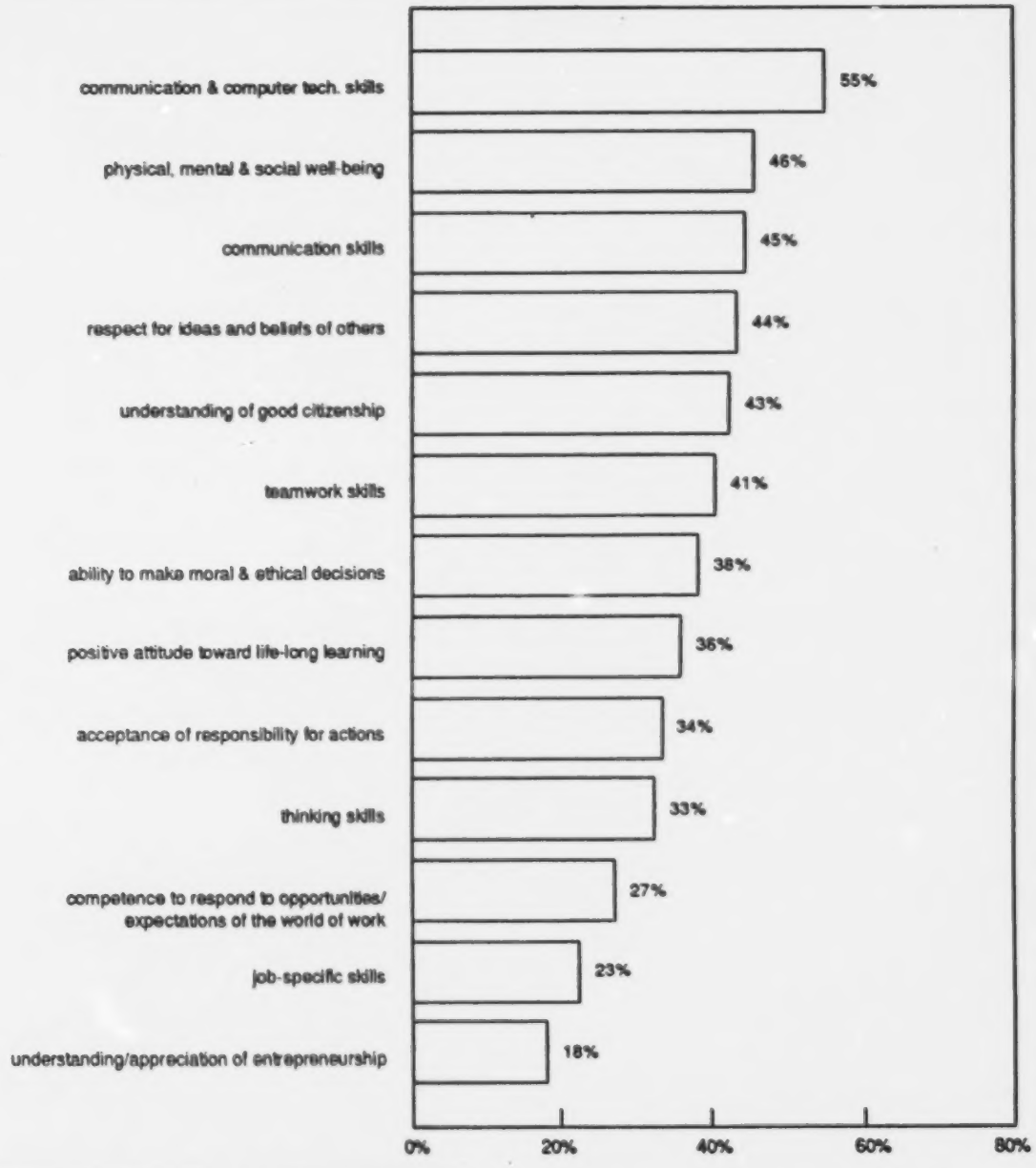
- teamwork skills;
- job-specific skills;
- physical, mental and social well-being;
- an understanding of good citizenship;
- competence to respond to the opportunities and expectations of the world of work;
- positive attitude toward lifelong learning;
- acceptance of responsibility for own actions;
- respect for the ideas and beliefs of others;
- abilities to make moral and ethical decisions;
- understanding and appreciation of entrepreneurship; and,
- communication and computer technology skills common to many jobs.

Figure 2 presents the opinions of employers and educators in regard to the preparation of high school students in each of the areas indicated. The opinions of students and the public are shown in Figure 3.

The consultation process results indicate that, generally, students are not considered to be well-prepared for entry to the work force. The only skill area in which more than one-half of all respondents believe that students are well-prepared is in regard to their skills to use communication and computer technologies.

FIGURE 1

Competencies of Students Entering the Work Force: All Respondents



1. Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (well prepared) or 5 (very well prepared) to the skill.
2. Don't know responses were treated as non-responses for this tabulation.

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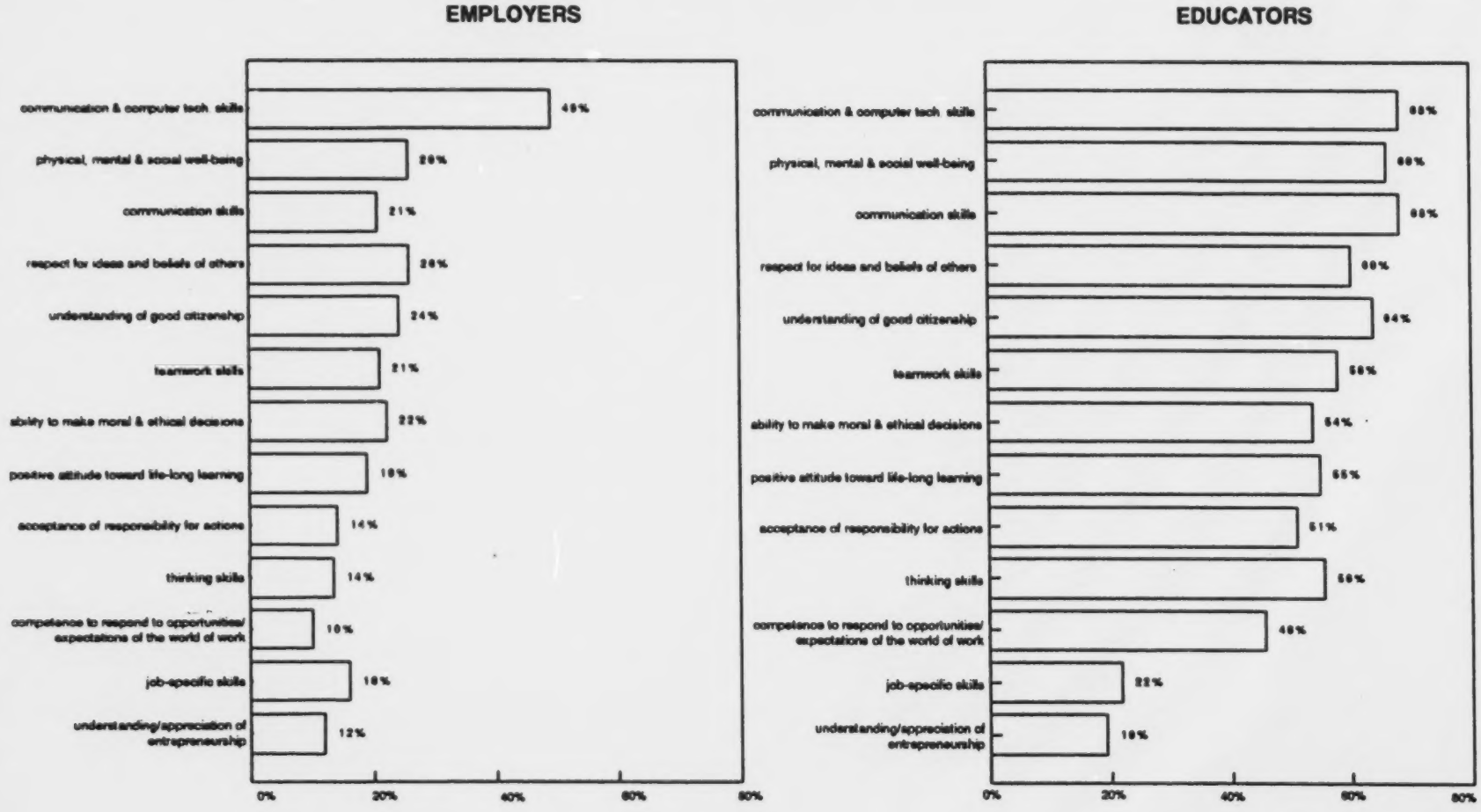
FIGURE 2

Competencies of Students Entering the Work Force: Employer and Educator Respondents



1. Percentage equates to percent of businesses assigning 4 (well prepared) or 5 (very well prepared) to the skill.
2. Don't know responses were treated as non-responses for this tabulation.

1. Percentage equates to percent of educators assigning 4 (well prepared) or 5 (very well prepared) to the skill.
2. Don't know responses were treated as non-responses for this tabulation.

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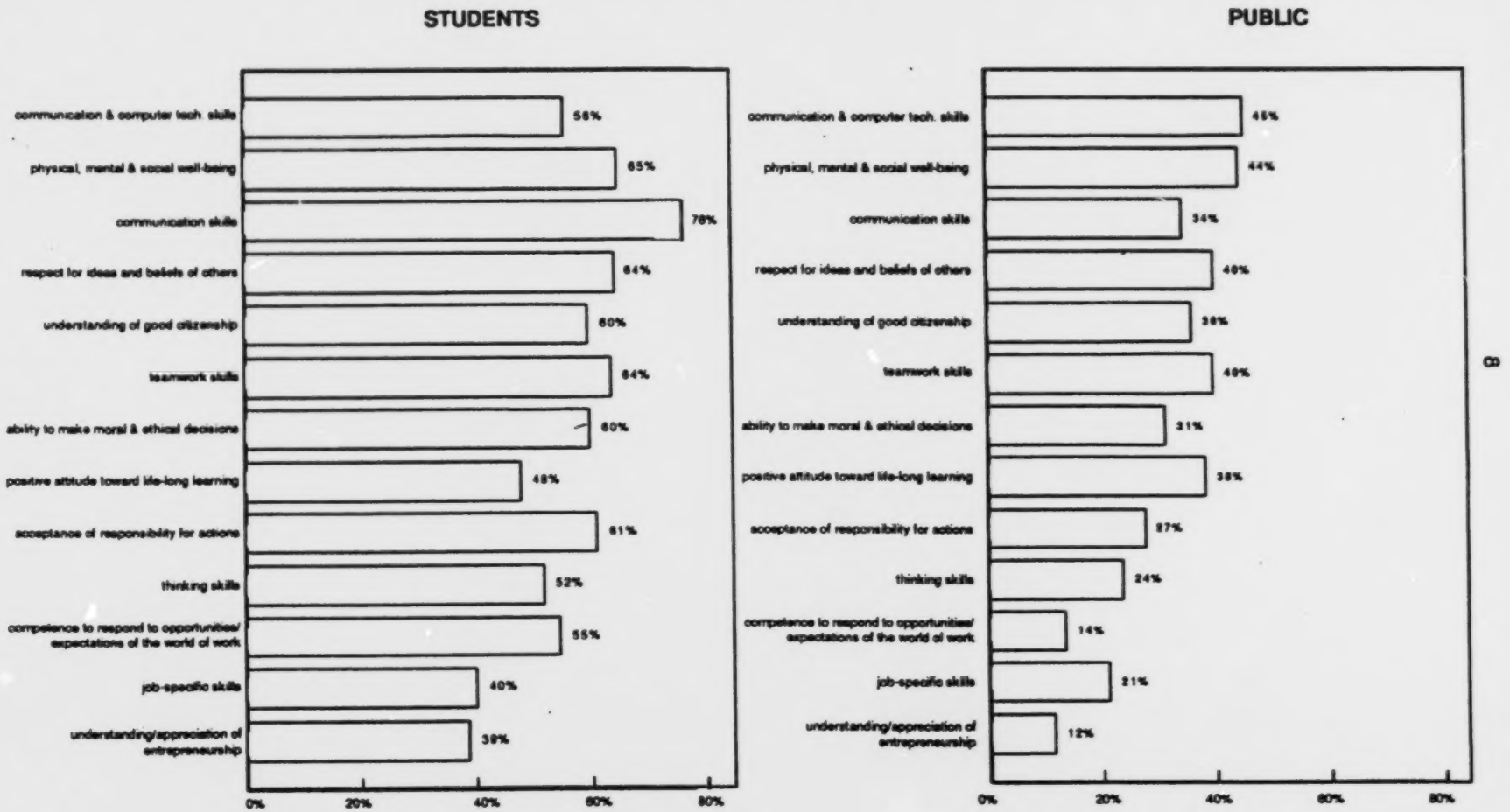
FIGURE 3

Competencies of Students Entering the Work Force: Student and Public Respondents



1. Percentage equates to percent of high school students assigning 4 (well prepared) or 5 (very well prepared) to the skill.
2. Don't know responses were treated as non-responses for this tabulation.

1. Percentage equates to percent of the public assigning 4 (well prepared) or 5 (very well prepared) to the skill.
2. Don't know responses were treated as non-responses for this tabulation.

Analysis of the survey data indicates that there are considerable differences in the opinions of employers and the public as compared to the opinions of educators and students about the competencies of students leaving high school. Educators and students, generally, consider students to be more well-prepared than employers and the public consider them to be prepared. The competency areas where there appears to be the greatest difference in opinion between employers and educators, with educators rating the competencies of students much higher than employers, are:

- communication skills;
- thinking skills;
- understanding of good citizenship; and,
- physical, mental, and social well-being.

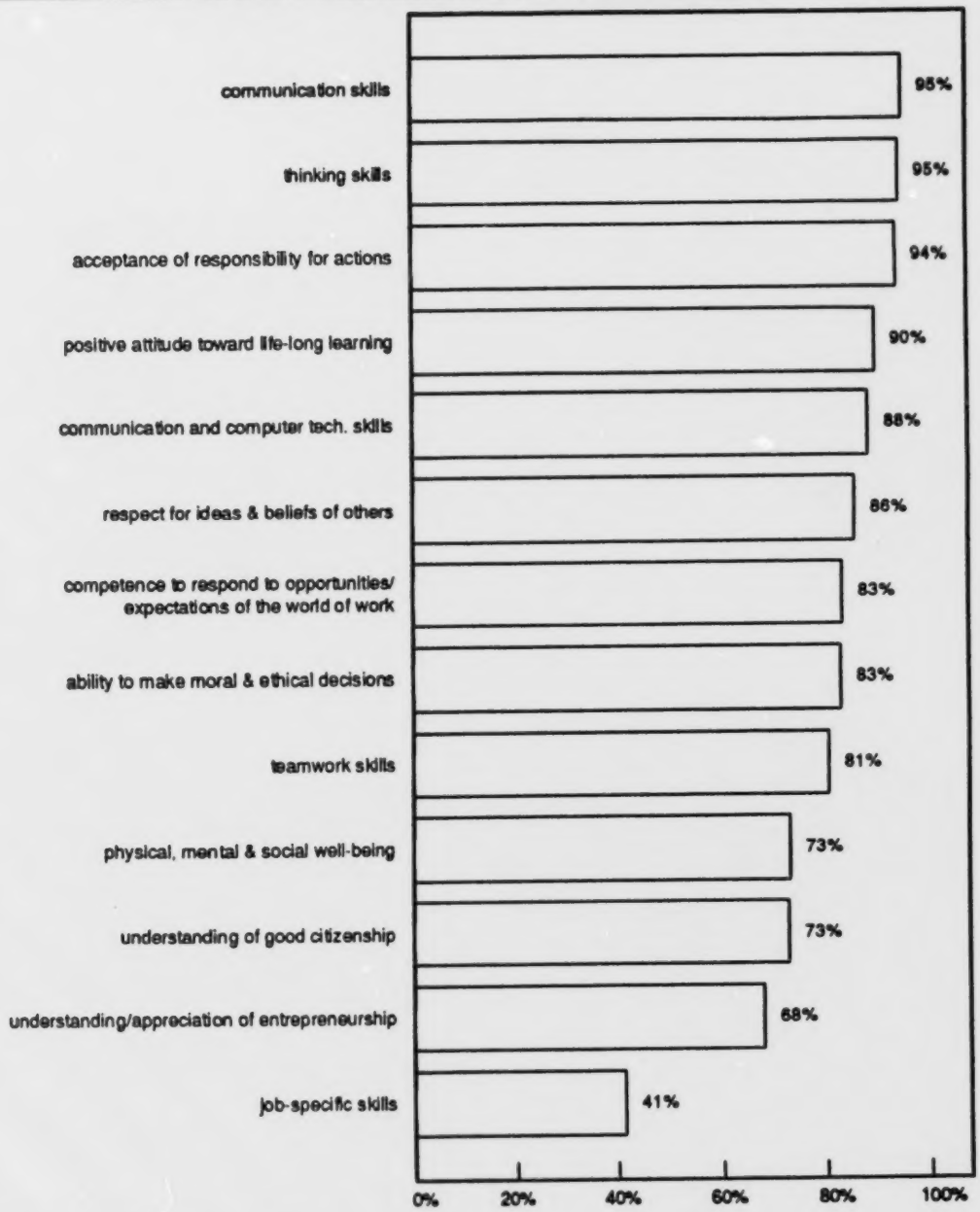
Analysis of the survey data also reveals some differences in the opinions of respondents about the preparation of students depending on the size of the community they live in. Respondents living in smaller communities (i.e., with populations less than 25,000) generally consider students to be better prepared in respect of their physical, mental and social well-being and having an understanding of good citizenship than respondents living in larger communities.

The questionnaire also asked respondents to indicate what priority they feel should be given to each of the identified competencies in the future by the educational community. The views of respondents about the future priorities are summarized in Figure 4.

Respondents clearly consider it more important that priority be given to general employability skills, including communication skills, thinking skills, ability to assume responsibility, and having a positive attitude toward lifelong learning, rather than job-specific skills.

FIGURE 4

Priority that the Educational Community Should Give to Specific Competencies: All Respondents



1. Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (priority) or 5 (high priority) to the skill.

The analysis of the views of the different categories of respondents in regard to future educational priorities indicates that:

- employers are no more inclined than educators to consider that priority should be given to the development of an understanding and appreciation among students of entrepreneurship;
- educators are more inclined than employers, students and the public to place a high priority on the understanding of good citizenship and the fostering of the physical, mental and social well-being of students;
- students are more inclined than other respondent groups to feel that schools should give a higher priority to job-specific skills; and,
- employers that have been involved in school-business partnerships are more inclined than employers that have not been involved in partnerships to feel that the educational community should give a higher priority to the development of students' team work skills and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others.

Other knowledge, skills and attitudes that respondents identified as being important for high school students to possess included:

- work ethic and a positive attitude;
- ability to deal with change;
- appreciation of the relationship between attitude, effort and ability and success;
- career planning knowledge and skills and job search skills;
- basic business knowledge and skills and knowledge of business practices in other countries;
- competencies in certain academic subjects, including history, philosophy, languages, economics, politics, sciences and ability to apply academic knowledge;

- leadership, organizational, and interpersonal skills;
- self-awareness;
- driving skills;
- patience;
- respect for authority;
- respect for the environment;
- creativity;
- penmanship;
- knowledge about first aid and safety;
- sense of humour; and,
- public speaking skills.

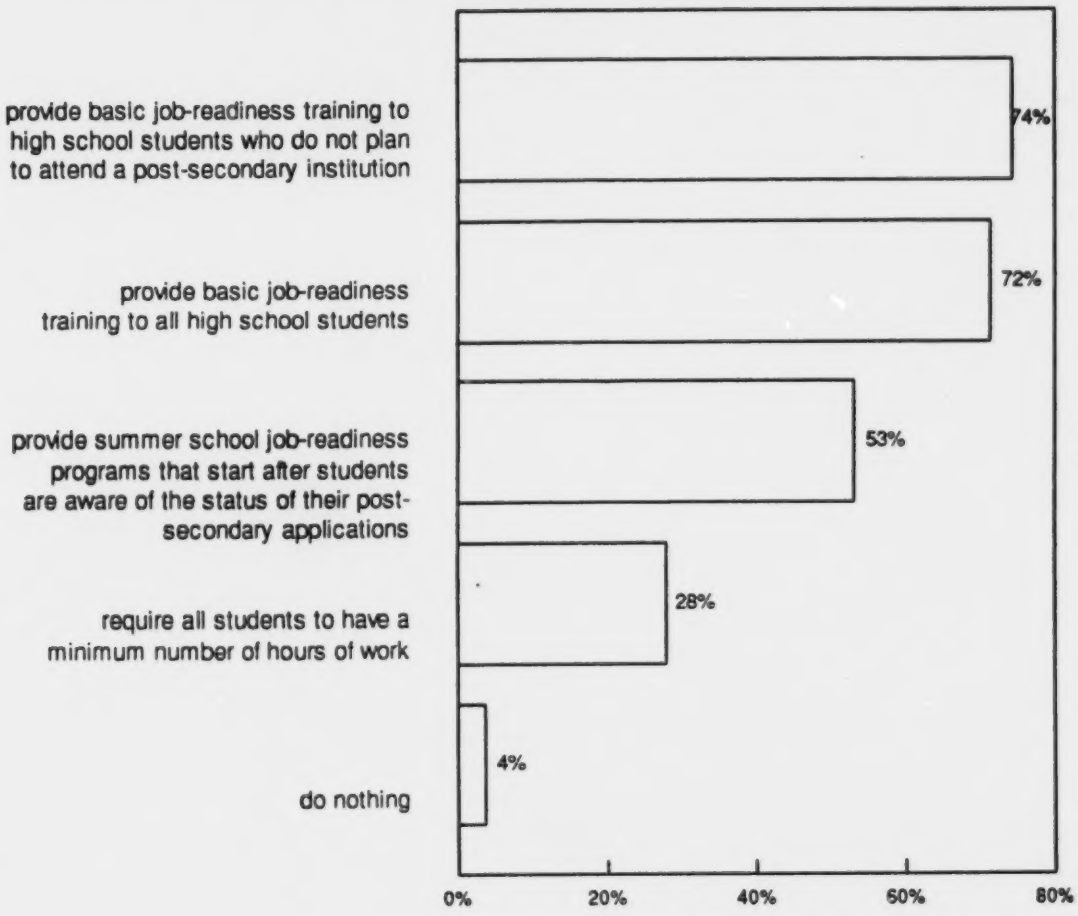
The issue of the divergence between the proportion of high school students that plan to go to university and the proportion of students that actually pursue post-secondary education immediately after high school was addressed as part of this public consultation process because of the resulting large number of students who enter the work force before they originally planned to do so. Respondents were asked their opinions on the appropriateness of a range of strategies to address this issue, and the relevant survey findings are shown in Figure 5. The preferred strategies are:

- to provide basic job-readiness training to high school students who do not plan to obtain a post-secondary education; and
- to provide basic job-readiness training to all high school students.

The results of this survey indicate that the support for all high school students to have a minimum number of hours of work experience is not strong.

FIGURE 5

Appropriateness of Strategies to Prepare Students for the Work Force


provide basic job-readiness training to high school students who do not plan to attend a post-secondary institution
74%
provide basic job-readiness training to all high school students
72%
provide summer school job-readiness programs that start after students are aware of the status of their post-secondary applications
53%
require all students to have a minimum number of hours of work
28%
do nothing
4%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%

Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (appropriate) or 5 (very appropriate) to the strategy.

2.2 COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EDUCATORS

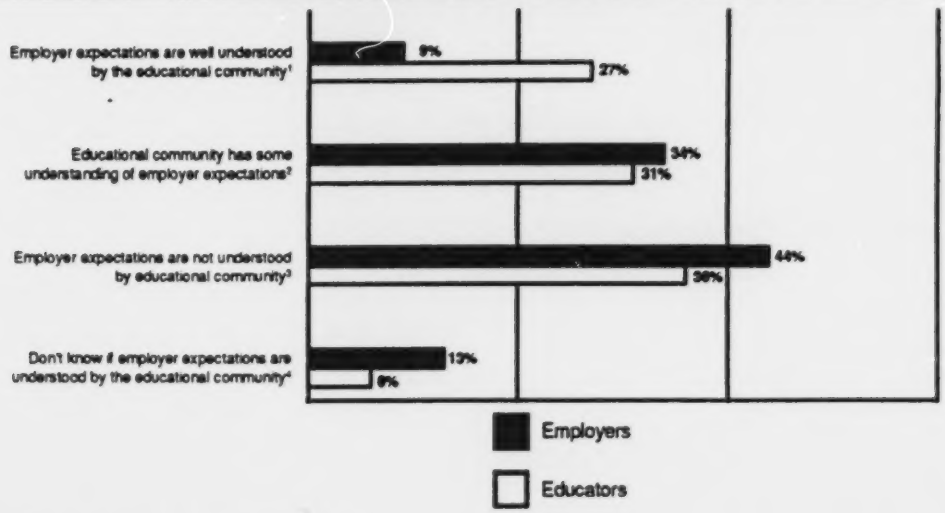
Perceptions regarding the awareness and understanding of the educational community about the needs and expectations of employers were identified as part of this public consultation process. The survey results point to the need for employers to work together to articulate their expectations in respect of the competencies of students who have completed high school in Alberta and for there to be forums for

employers and educators to share information and discuss issues related to the preparation of students for employment.

As shown in Figures 6 and 7, there is a considerable difference in opinion between the employers and educators that participated in this public consultation process about the extent to which the educational community, generally, understands employer expectations and the extent to which teachers, specifically, understand the needs of employers.

FIGURE 6

Awareness and Understanding of Educational Community About Employer Expectations



1 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents answering 4 or 5, where 5 indicated that the expectations of employers are very well understood.

2 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents answering 3, where 5 indicated that the expectations of employers are very well understood.

3 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents answering 1 or 2, where 1 indicated that the expectations of employers are not at all understood.

4 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents indicating that they did not know if the expectations are understood.

The survey results indicate that educators feel that they have a better understanding of employer needs and expectations than employers feel educators have. Whereas almost one-third of the educator respondents believe that the needs and expectations of employers are well understood by educators, only 9% of the employer respondents are of that opinion. Indeed, approximately one-half of the employer respondents indicated that they feel that teachers do not have a good understanding of the needs of employers.

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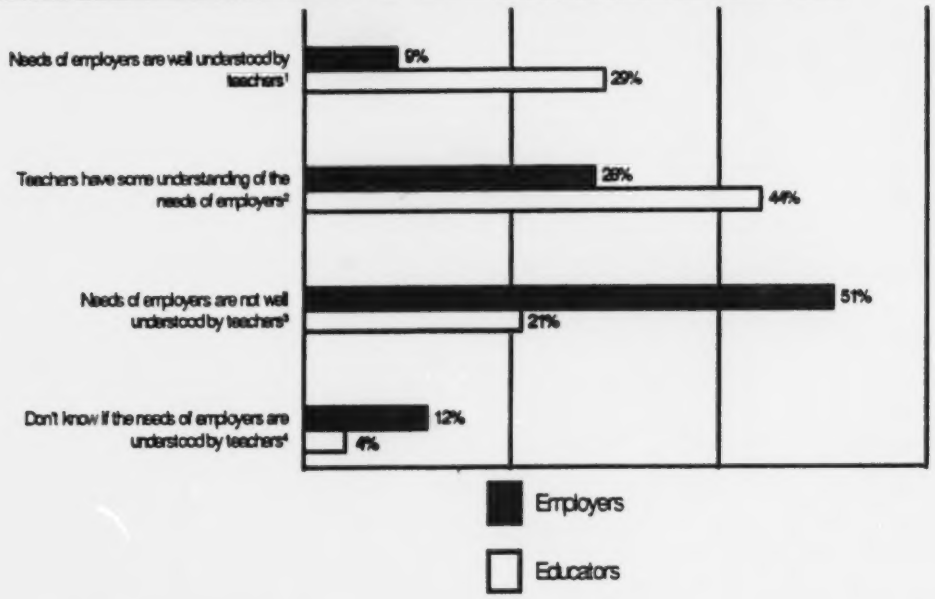
FIGURE 7

Understanding of Teachers About the Needs of Employers



1 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents answering 4 or 5, where 5 indicated that teachers understand the needs of employers very well.

2 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents answering 3, where 5 indicated that teachers understand the needs of employers very well.

3 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents answering 1 or 2, where 1 indicated that the needs of employers are not well understood by teachers.

4 Percentage equates to the percentage of respondents indicating that they did not know if teachers understand the needs of employers.

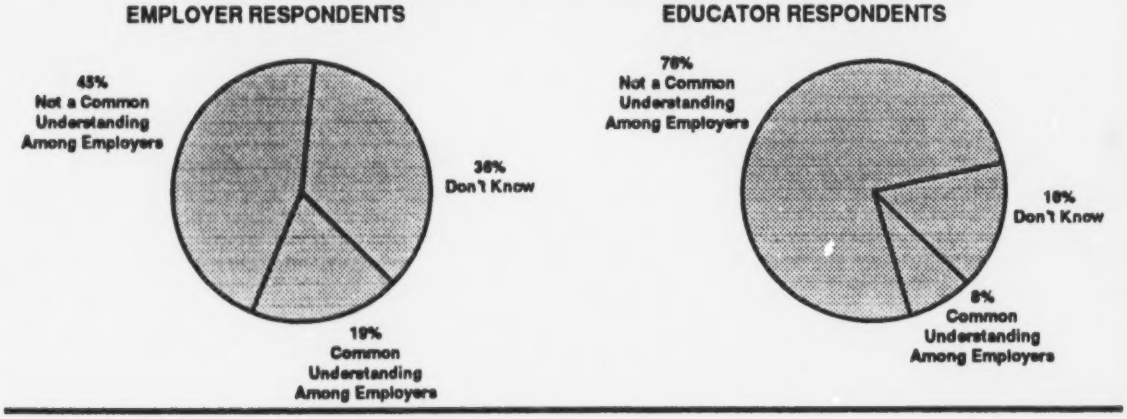
Educators were also asked whether they consider the expectations that employers have for the public education system to be realistic. About one-third of the educators indicated that they feel that employers have unrealistic expectations; about one-half of the educators feel that the expectations of employers are somewhat or very realistic. The balance of the educator respondents -- roughly 15% -- are unsure as to whether or not employers' expectations are realistic.

Another issue examined in the consultation process was the extent to which employers and educators perceive that employers have a common understanding about what they expect of the educational

community. As shown in Figure 8, a high proportion of both educators (76%) and employers (45%) feel that there is a lack of a common understanding among employers about their expectations of the education system. A relatively high proportion of the employer respondents -- approximately one-third -- indicated that they do not know if employers have common expectations in respect of the education system.

FIGURE 8

Understanding Among Employers of the Expectations that Employers Have of the Educational Community



Notwithstanding the different perceptions of employers and educators about the understanding of educators of the expectations that employers have for the public education system, the responses to the question about the priority that should be given by the educational community to various competencies, as summarized in Figure 4, indicate a relatively high level of alignment in the views of the two groups.

The views of respondents about the organizations that **currently** represent and **should** represent the voice of employers in communicating needs to the education community at the local level are summarized in Table 2. Table 3 summarizes the views of respondents about the organizations that **currently** represent and **should** represent the voice of employers at the provincial level.

TABLE 2
Organizations Representing the Views of Employers at the Local Level (Multiple Responses Permitted)

	Currently Represents Employers	Should Represent Employers
Local Chambers of Commerce	37%	46%
Better Business Bureau	4%	11%
None	27%	3%
Other	15%	20%

TABLE 3
Organizations Representing the Views of Employers at the Provincial Level (Multiple Responses Permitted)

	Currently Represents Employers	Should Represent Employers
Alberta Economic Development and Tourism	11%	24%
Alberta Chamber of Commerce	26%	40%
Conference Board of Canada	12%	14%
Canadian Federation of Independent Business	14%	28%
Alberta Chamber of Resources	11%	12%
Individual Industry Associations	21%	37%
Alberta Apprenticeship Board	25%	33%
None	5%	2%

Other groups that respondents indicated should represent employers at the local level included:

- business or employer associations;
- specific industry trade groups;
- individual employers or one major employer;
- school councils;
- school boards;
- city council;
- health authority;

- Canadian Federation of Independent Business;
- Rotary Club;
- Apprenticeship Board;
- Partners in Education Councils;
- Economic Development Board;
- post-secondary institutions;
- Human Resources Development Canada;
- Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development; and
- Junior Achievement.

Business or employer associations or specific industry trade groups, however, were the most frequently mentioned "other" responses.

Other groups that respondents indicated should represent employers at the provincial level included industry associations and organizations such as Junior Achievement.

Almost all employer respondents indicated that **some** groups or organizations should represent the voice of employers in the education community. The Chamber of Commerce was cited most frequently by respondents as the organization that should represent employers in discussions relating to education issues at both the local and provincial levels.

2.3 EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

All survey respondents were asked whether they felt that employers should be more involved in education and the responses to this question are shown in Figure 9. A majority of respondents -- 75% -- indicated that they feel that employers should be more extensively involved in education, however, analysis of the survey results indicate that employer respondents are more supportive of this than educators. (80% of the employer respondents indicated that they would like to see employers more involved in education as compared to 68% of the educator respondents.)

FIGURE 9

Extent of Employer Involvement in Education

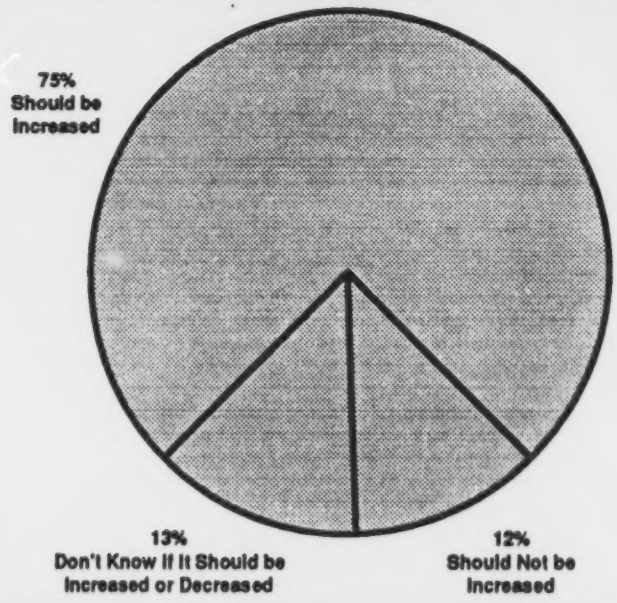
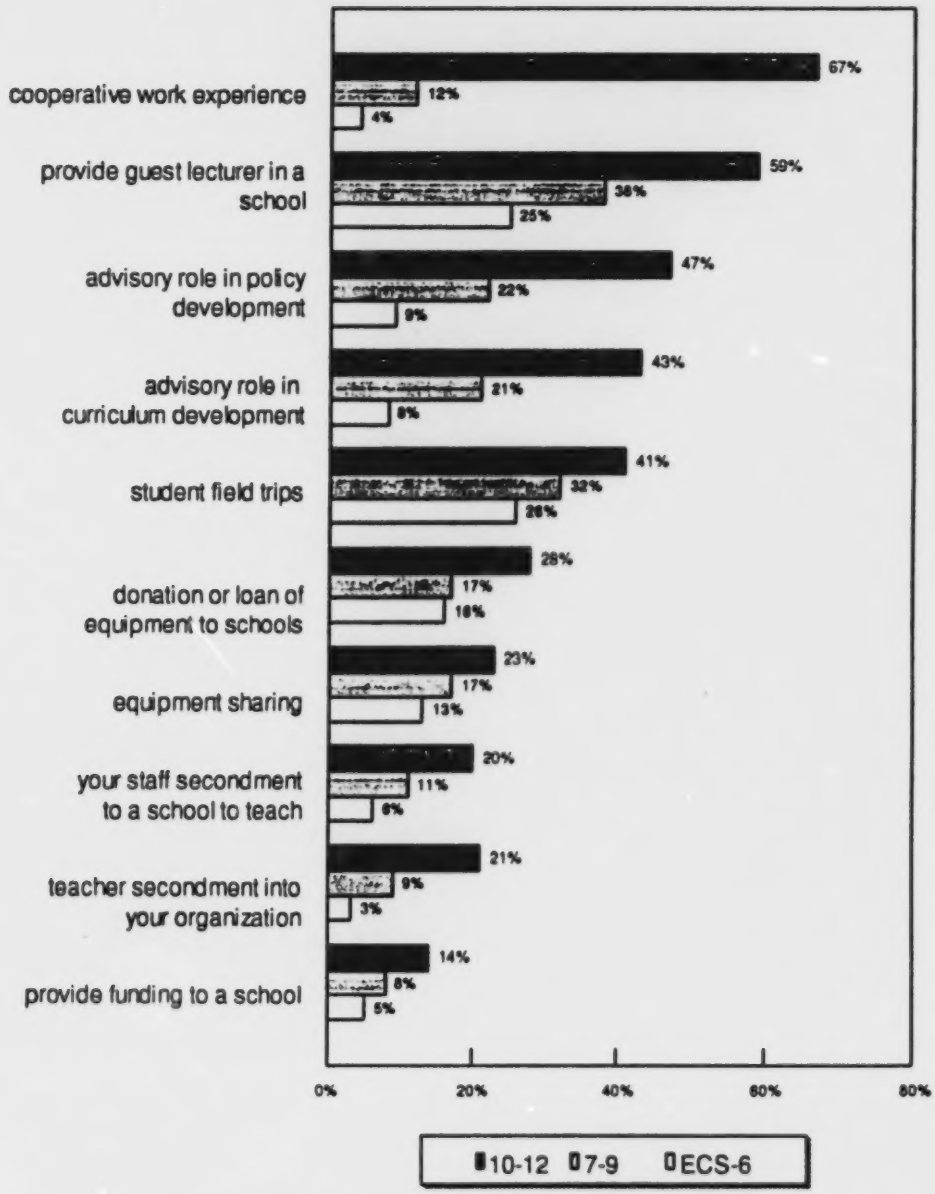


Figure 10 shows the nature of the increased involvement that the employer respondents indicated that they would prefer. Employers, generally, indicated a preference to be involved at the high school level and that they are most interested in participating in cooperative work experience programs and providing guest lectures in schools. A relatively high proportion of employers -- over 40% -- also indicated that they would be interested in providing advice in respect of policy development relating to directions, outputs and standards in education as well as curriculum at the high school level. Cross-tabulations revealed that the employer respondents in Edmonton and Calgary tended to be more interested in serving in an advisory capacity on educational policy and curriculum and providing guest lecturers in schools than the employer respondents in smaller communities in the province.

There is modest interest on the part of the employer respondents to donate or loan equipment to schools, share equipment with schools, have their staff teach at a school on secondment, have teachers in their organizations on secondment, or provide funding to a school on an "earmarked" or general basis.

FIGURE 10

Involvement Interests of Employers



Percentage equates to percent of respondents indicating interest.

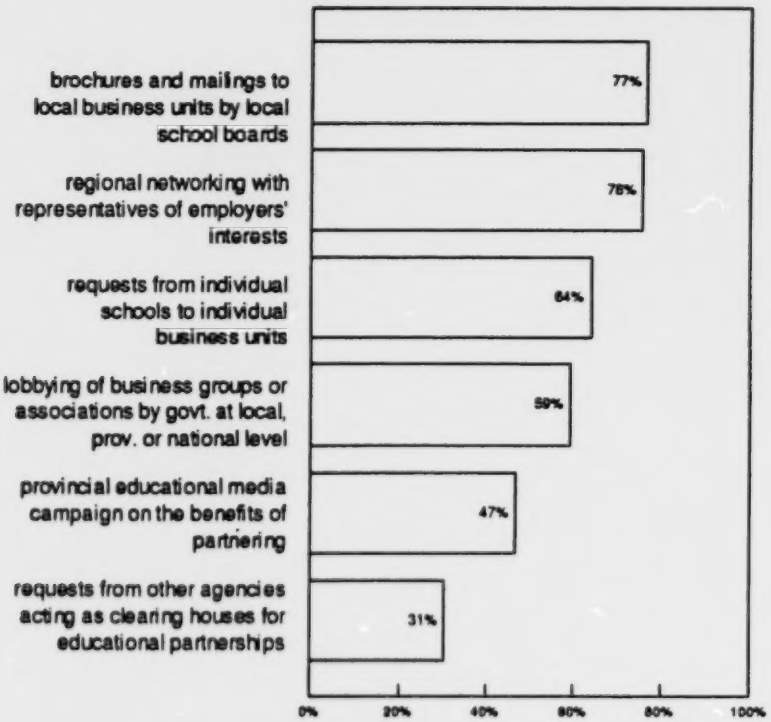
Employer respondents indicated that they would also consider a range of other forms of involvement with the school system, including:

- bulk purchasing;
- shared usage of facilities;
- counselling;
- participating in career fairs;
- providing teacher aide services;
- sponsoring activities;
- sponsoring scholarships;
- participating in job shadowing programs;
- taking on student volunteers;
- tutoring;
- safety training;
- participating in science fairs;
- organizing and hosting seminars;
- participating in "Boss" for a day programs; and,
- assisting with school lunch programs.

The questionnaire also sought to identify the preferences of employers regarding their organization being solicited to participate in an educational partnership. As shown in Figure 11, the preferred approaches are receiving brochures and mailings from local school boards, networking with representatives of employers' interests, and individual schools making direct requests to individual business units. Less than one-half of the employer respondents favoured a provincial educational media campaign on the benefits of partnering or receiving requests from agencies acting as clearing houses for educational partnerships. Other suggestions made by respondents included the channeling of requests through partnership committees, school boards, or industry associations.

FIGURE 11

Employer Preferences Regarding Being Solicited to be Involved in an Educational Partnership

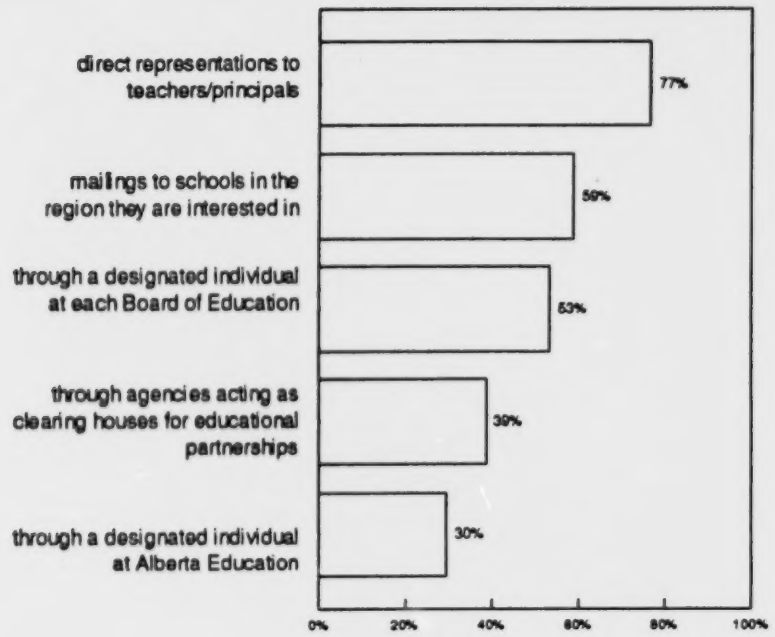

brochures and mailings to local business units by local school boards
77%
regional networking with representatives of employers' interests
78%
requests from individual schools to individual business units
64%
lobbying of business groups or associations by govt. at local, prov. or national level
59%
provincial educational media campaign on the benefits of partnering
47%
requests from other agencies acting as clearing houses for educational partnerships
31%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%

Percentage equates to percent of respondents indicating yes.

The views of the educator respondents about how employers should approach educators to develop an educational partnership are presented in Figure 12. The preferred approaches of educators are that employers make direct representations to teachers or principals, contact schools in the region they are interested in by mail, and through a designated individual at each school board.

FIGURE 12

Educator Preferences Regarding Being Approached by Employers to Develop an Educational Partnership



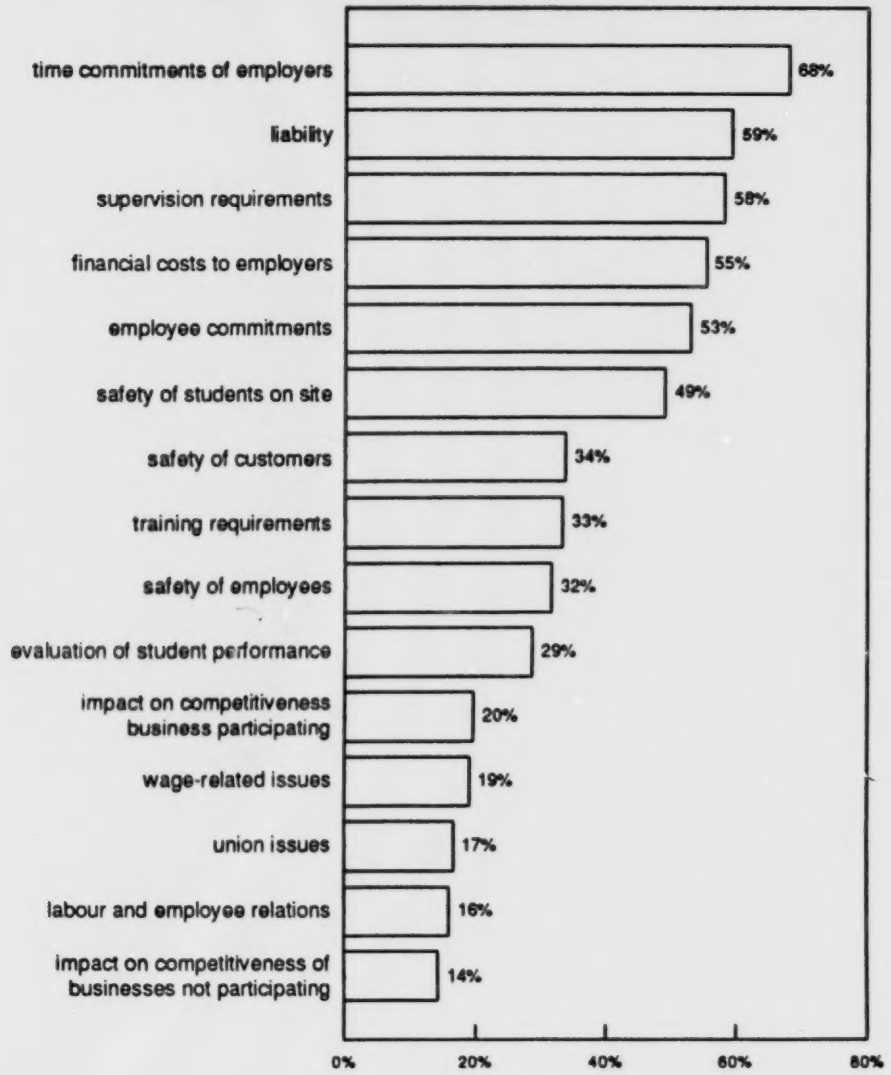
Percentage equates to percent of respondents indicating yes.

Figure 13 presents the survey findings regarding the concerns of the employers that participated in this consultation process about increasing their involvement in education.

These findings indicate that the priority concerns of employers are the required time commitments on their part, liability, supervision requirements, the financial costs to them, and the required commitments of their employees. The employers who completed a questionnaire are, generally, not concerned about the impact of their increased involvement in education on their competitiveness or the competitiveness of businesses that are not involved. Further analysis of the data revealed that employers who have been involved in a partnership are even less concerned about the impact of their increased involvement on the competitiveness of employers that do not participate in partnerships, than those that have not been involved in a partnership.

FIGURE 13

Employer Concerns About Increasing Their Involvement in Education



Percentage equates to percent of respondents 4 (concern) or 5 (significant concern) to the issue.

Other concerns mentioned by employer respondents included:

- the stigma if a partnership does not work out;
- confidentiality;
- Workers' Compensation;
- interference from school personnel; and,
- potential detraction from current involvement with post-secondary education.

The concerns of educators about an increased involvement of schools with employers are presented in Figure 14.

The greatest concern of educators is the increased demand on their time.

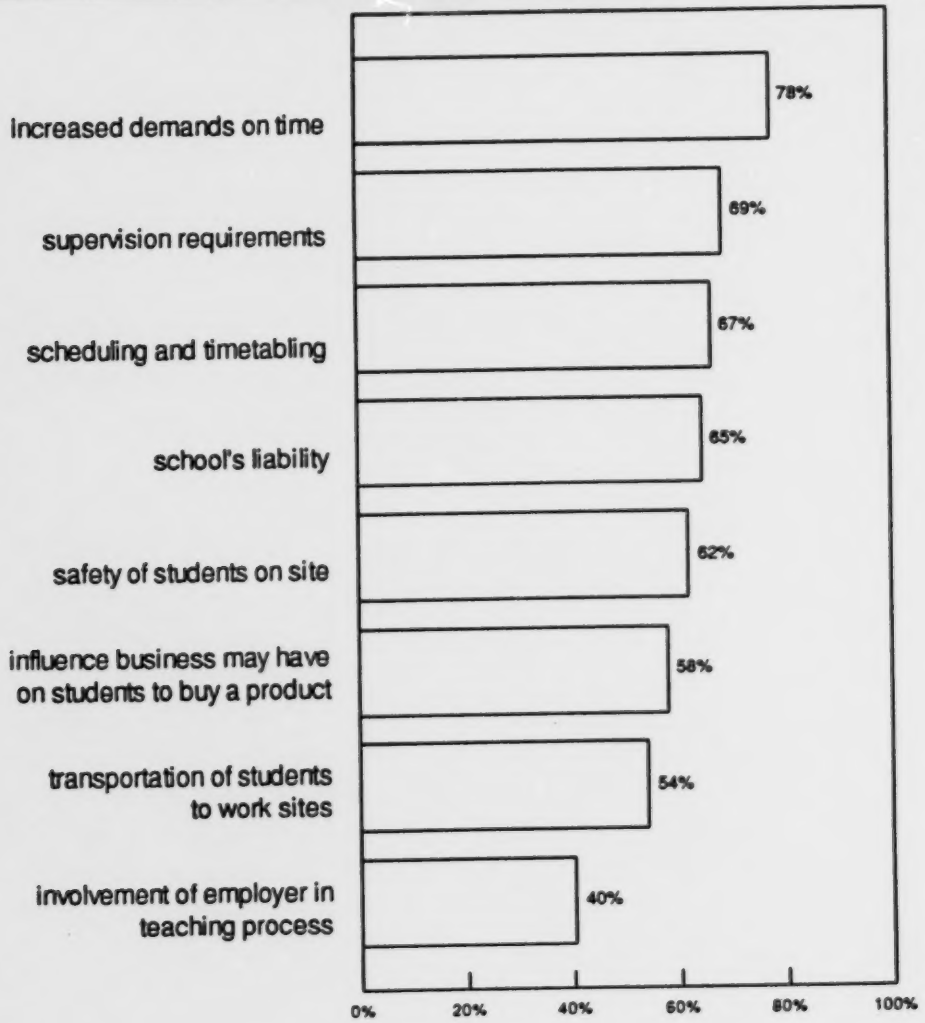
Analysis of the responses revealed that educators in smaller communities in the province (i.e. with populations of less that 25,000) are, not surprisingly, more concerned than educators in larger communities about the issue of the transportation of students to work sites.

All survey respondents were asked whether they considered it appropriate for schools to become involved in assisting employers under the following terms:

- on a fee-for-service basis;
- as part of a larger reciprocal agreement; and
- at no cost to business in order to generate good will.

FIGURE 14

Concerns of Educators About Increased Involvement with Employers



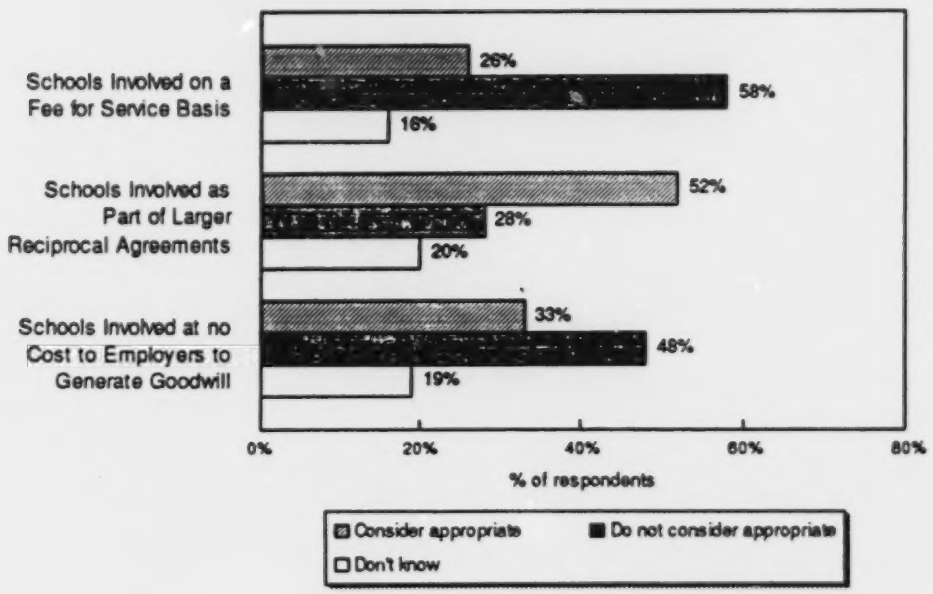
Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (concern) or 5 (significant concern) to the issue.

The responses to this question are summarized in Figure 15.

The types of involvement of schools considered to be most appropriate is for the involvement to be part of larger reciprocal agreements with employers, although it must be recognized that there is mixed support for this. There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of educators and employers about the appropriateness of schools being involved on a fee for service basis or as part of reciprocal agreements. Educators, however, are less in favour than the other respondent groups of schools providing services to employers at no cost as a way of generating good will.

FIGURE 15

Appropriateness of Schools Becoming More Involved with Employers



The matter of imbalances between employer partnering opportunities and school partnering requests was addressed as part of this consultation process. Almost one-half of the survey respondents -- 47% -- think that employers might reduce or eliminate their involvement in education if too many schools pursue partnering relationships with the same employers. The cross-tabulations, however, reveal that this view is held more by educators (74%) than employers (56%).

There is mixed support for an agency to be established to act as a "clearing house" for education partnerships to address the potential problem of too many schools pursuing the same employers: 44% of the survey respondents support this idea; 39% do not support this idea; and 17% indicated that they were unable to offer an opinion in respect of this matter.

In the event of a number of good partnering opportunities existing, but time and resources permitting only one, respondents generally favour that educators select the best learning opportunity. Educators, in particular, believe that the selection should be made on the basis of the best learning opportunity (94% of the educator respondents considered this to be an appropriate approach as compared to 67% of the employer respondents).

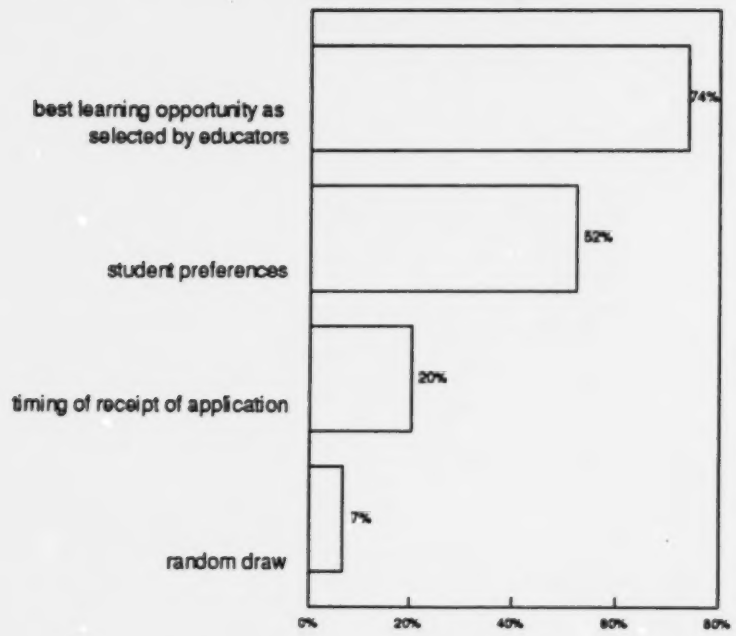
The views of respondents about the alternative approaches for dealing with the potential issue of an **excess** of partnering opportunities are shown in Figure 16.

Other suggestions made by respondents to deal with this potential issue included:

- have school boards identify the preferred opportunity;
- educators and students make the selection;
- involve parents/school councils in the selection;
- have selection made by committees of educators and employers or educators, parents and employers;
- give priority to potential partners in growth industries or that offer the greatest economic potential;
- give priority to potential partners that have demonstrated reliability/commitment;
- have competitions among "bidders";
- allow students to interview and select partners; and,
- be less restrictive; rotate among employers.

FIGURE 16

Views Regarding Approaches for Selecting A Partnering Opportunity



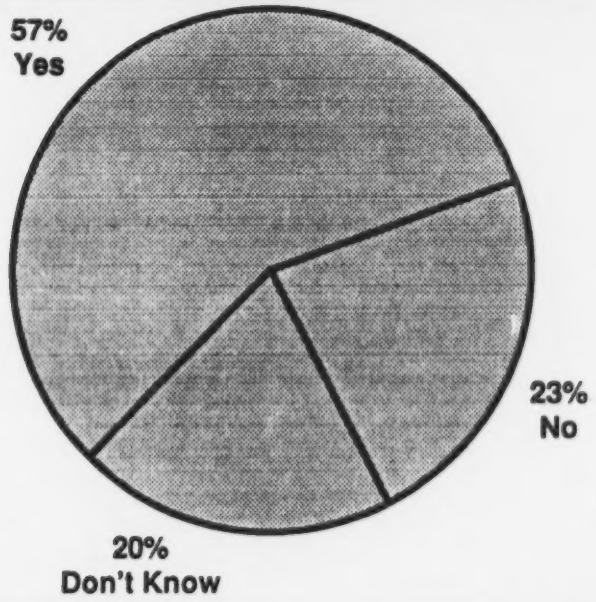
Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (appropriate) or 5 (very appropriate).

2.4 THE PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS

The survey administered as part of this consultation process addressed the concern of the part-time jobs of students conflicting with their programs of study at school. As shown in Figure 17, the majority of respondents are of the opinion that employers would be prepared to help educators to establish students' programs of study as a higher priority than part-time employment. Analysis of the responses did not reveal any statistically significant differences between the opinions of educators and employers on this matter.

FIGURE 17

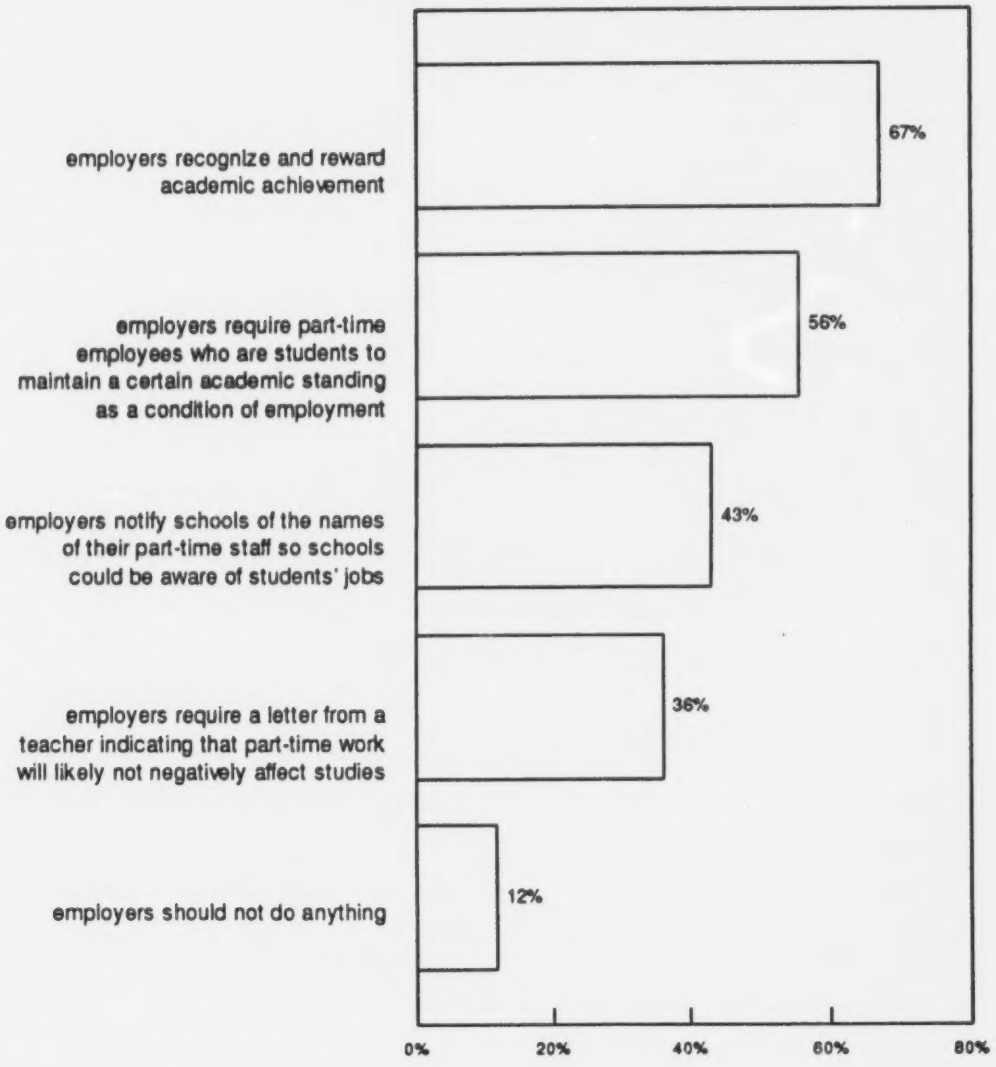
Willingness of Employers to Establish School as a Higher Priority than Part-Time Employment



A significant majority of respondents -- almost 90% -- are of the opinion that employers should do **something** to raise the importance of schooling among students employed part-time. The opinions regarding the appropriateness of the various approaches for employers to assist in raising the priority of school work among students working part-time are summarized in Figure 18. The strategy for which there is greatest support among respondents is for employers to recognize and reward academic achievement. This is clearly a preferred strategy in the eyes of educators, as shown by the 79% of educator respondents who indicated that they consider employer recognition programs to be very appropriate.

FIGURE 18

Appropriateness of Strategies for Raising the Priority of Schooling Among Students Employed Part-Time


employers recognize and reward academic achievement
67%
employers require part-time employees who are students to maintain a certain academic standing as a condition of employment
56%
employers notify schools of the names of their part-time staff so schools could be aware of students' jobs
43%
employers require a letter from a teacher indicating that part-time work will likely not negatively affect studies
36%
employers should not do anything
12%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%

Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (appropriate) or 5 (very appropriate) to the strategy.

Other comments made by respondents about approaches for employers to raise the priority of schooling included:

- restrict the number of hours that persons under the age of 18 can work;
- encourage employers to provide pay raises on the basis of grades;
- communication among teachers, employers, parents and students about student attendance and achievement;
- require students to inform schools about part-time work;
- encourage employers to be more sensitive to the needs of students (e.g. allow flexible hours, time off to study during exams);
- encourage employers to make school attendance and punctuality a condition of employment;
- this should not be the responsibility of employers; it is a responsibility of parents and students; and,
- this (i.e. concern about conflict between studies and student part-time employment) should only be a concern for co-op-type programs.

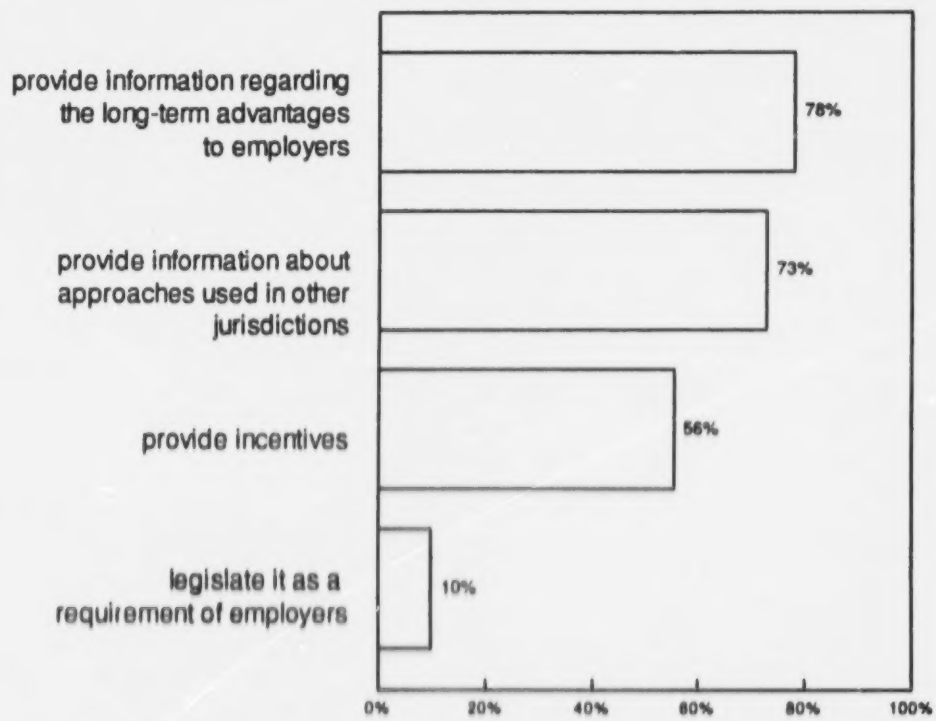
2.5 STRENGTHENING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The findings from this public consultation process indicate that there is considerable support for the government to attempt to encourage employers to become more involved in education. While 70% of all questionnaire respondents indicated that they would like the government to pursue some initiatives to increase the involvement of employers in education, educators are marginally less supportive of this than employers (66% of educators responded that government should attempt to encourage employers to become more involved in education as compared to 72% of employers).

Figure 19 summarizes the views of respondents about the appropriateness of alternative strategies open to government to encourage employers to become more involved in education. The preferred approaches are to provide information about the long-term advantages of involvement in education to employers and provide employers with information about the approaches used in other jurisdictions. Respondents, generally, are opposed to employer involvement in education being a legislated requirement.

FIGURE 19

Appropriateness of Alternative Options to Encourage Employer Involvement in Education



Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (appropriate) or 5 (very appropriate) to the option.

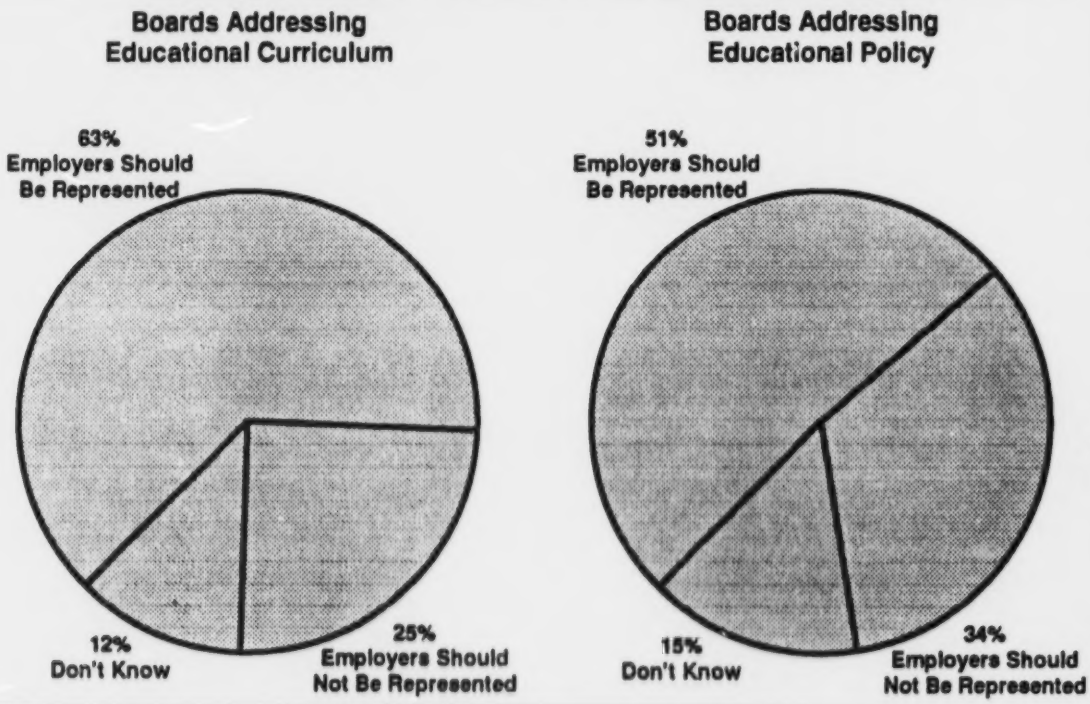
Other suggestions made by respondents to encourage employers to become more involved in education included:

- increase the communication between employers and educators; allow employers to learn about today's educational challenges;
- increase the involvement of employers in policy setting and give business a say in curriculum development and the operation of schools;
- "just ask" and advise employers about how they could participate;
- expand apprenticeship programs at the high school and junior high school levels and make apprenticeship programs more appealing;
- expand work experience programs;
- modify school hours and breaks to better meet employer needs;
- provide employers with training and materials;
- involve employers in job/career orientation activities and job shadowing programs;
- encourage different types of partnerships (e.g. with non-profit organizations);
- encourage partnerships that are easily administered;
- provide recognition/awards for participating employers; promote competitions among employers;
- have business/teacher exchange programs;
- support non-government initiatives to encourage employers to become more involved in education;
- amend labour laws; and,
- have students work for free.

Figure 20 summarizes the survey findings regarding the opinions of respondents about whether or not employers should be represented on provincial boards or agencies addressing educational curriculum and educational policy. The findings indicate that there is greater support for employers to be more involved with matters relating to curriculum than policy. The cross-tabulations performed on the survey data reveal that the employer respondents are more supportive of employer representation than are any of the other respondent groups.

FIGURE 20

Appropriateness of Employer Representation on Boards or Agencies Addressing Educational Curriculum and Educational Policy

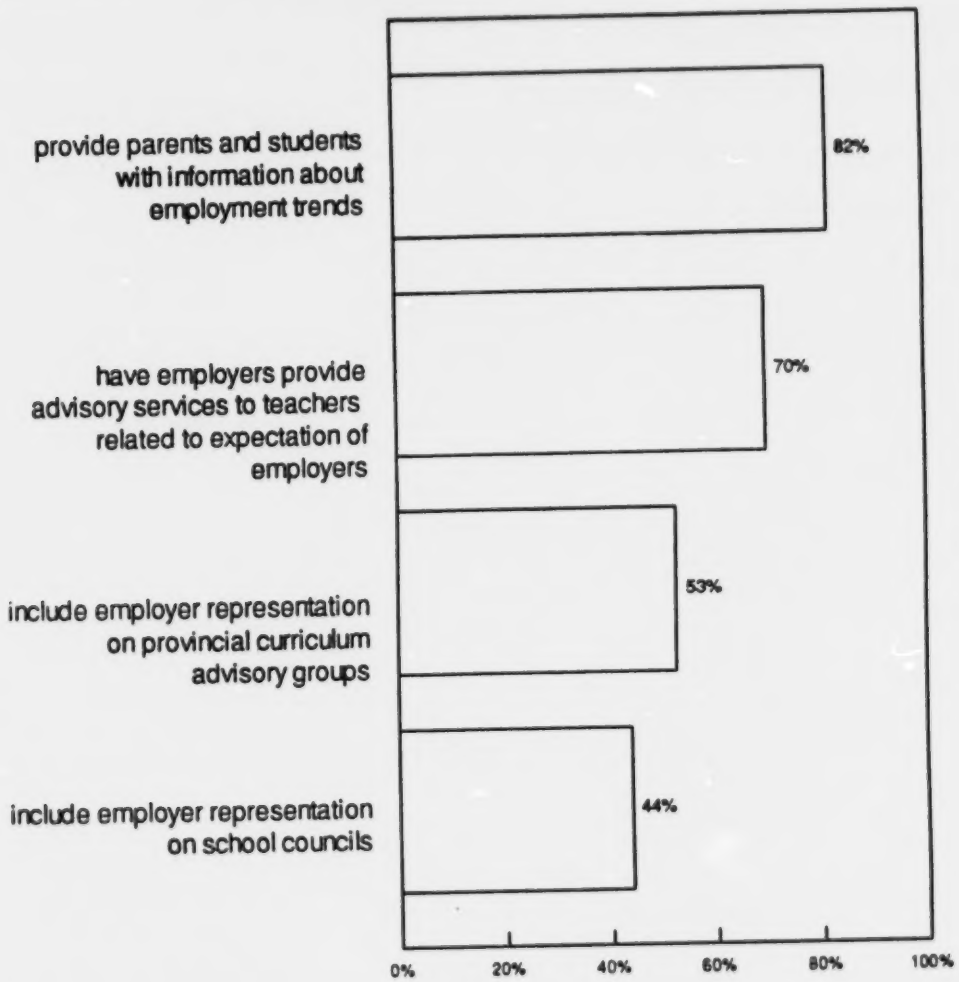

Boards Addressing Educational Curriculum
63% Employers Should Be Represented
12% Don't Know
25% Employers Should Not Be Represented
Boards Addressing Educational Policy
51% Employers Should Be Represented
15% Don't Know
34% Employers Should Not Be Represented

Views about the appropriateness of alternatives for improving the integration of employer needs into schools to ease the transition of students from school to work were also sought during the public consultation process. As shown in Figure 21, the preferred approaches are to provide parents and students with information about employment trends and have employers provide advisory services to teachers relating to the expectations of employers. While almost two-thirds of the respondents feel that employers should be represented on provincial boards or agencies addressing educational curriculum (see Figure 20),

a smaller proportion of the respondents, approximately one-half, consider employer representation on provincial curriculum advisory groups to be an appropriate way to improve the integration of employer needs into schools.

FIGURE 21

Appropriateness of Approaches to Integrate Employer Needs Into Schools



Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (appropriate) or 5 (very appropriate) to the strategies.

The following are some of the additional suggestions made by respondents to improve the integration of employer needs into schools:

- provide educators with information about employment trends;
- encourage employers to talk to students about needs;
- employers provide advice to school boards; and,
- have teacher/business exchange programs.

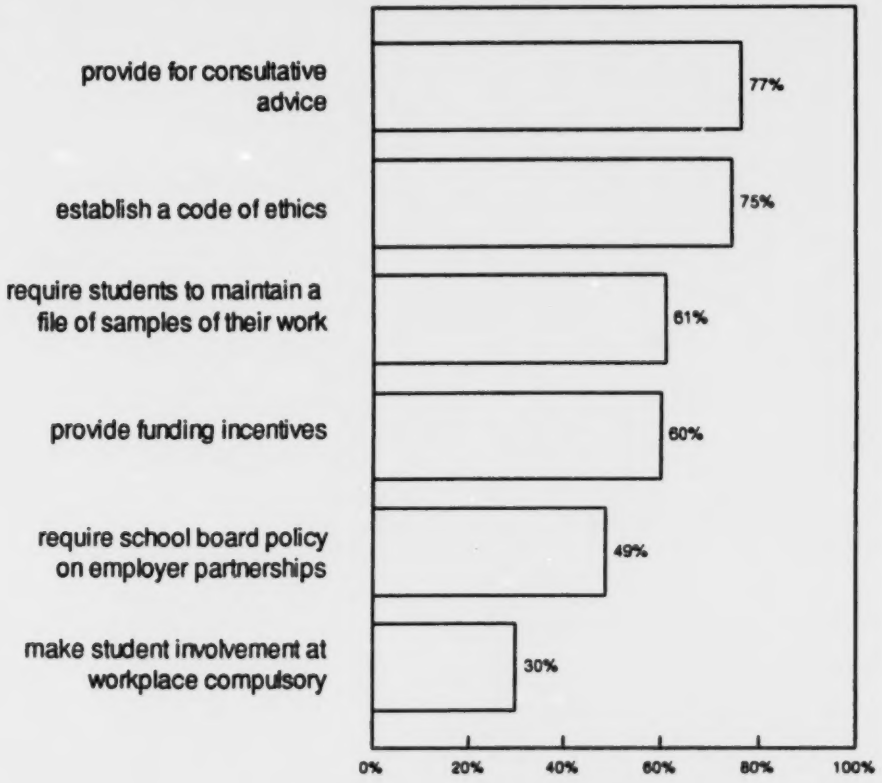
There is mixed support for employers to have representation on school councils. Overall, 44% of survey respondents are in favour of employer representation on school councils as compared to 29% who are opposed to this idea. A further 27% are neither strongly in favour nor opposed to employer representation on school councils. Cross-tabulations reveal no difference in the opinions of the educator and the employer respondents on this matter.

The questionnaire administered as part of this public consultation process sought views as well about approaches that could be taken by the provincial government to encourage the education sector to become more involved with employers. As indicated in Figure 22, the preferred approaches are to provide consultative advice to the education sector, establish a code of ethics in respect of school-business partnerships, provide funding incentives, and require students to maintain a file of samples of their work demonstrating the skills they offer to employers. There is mixed support for mandatory school board policies on employer partnerships and modest support for making student involvement at a work place compulsory. The cross-tabulations on the survey responses indicate that:

- educators are more supportive of school board policies on employer partnerships than the other respondent groups;
- students are more inclined than the other respondent groups to consider compulsory student work place involvement to be appropriate; and,
- employers are less supportive than the other respondent groups of providing funding incentives to encourage the education sector to become more involved with employers.

FIGURE 22

Appropriateness of Approaches to Encourage the Education Sector to Become More Involved With Employers



Percentage equates to percent of respondents responding "yes" to the option.

Respondents offered a range of other suggestions for encouraging the education sector to become more involved with employers. These included:

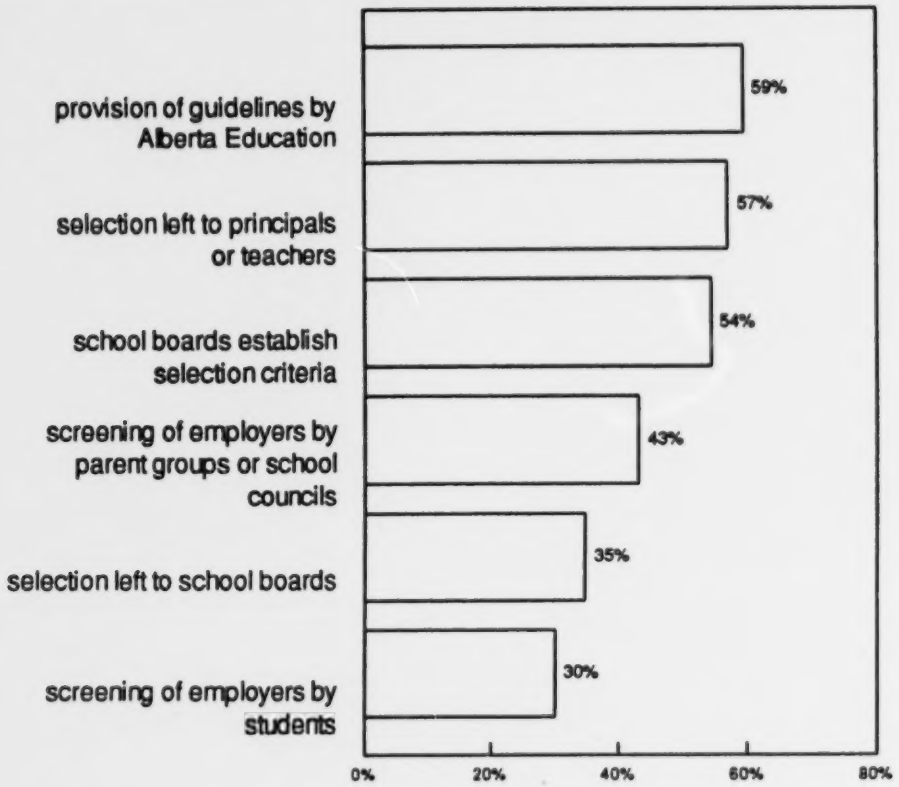
- educating educators about business and the role business plays;
- promoting the development of a culture within the educational community that values business;
- giving teachers the time and funding to become more involved with employers; providing increased funding for the development, coordination and monitoring of apprenticeship-type programs;

- offering more business courses in schools;
- expanding co-op programs;
- providing educators with information about successful partnerships/partnership models;
- giving credit for student work experience;
- encouraging educators to work with Chambers of Commerce and regional business development organizations;
- developing standards for work place education addressing skills, safety, remuneration;
- promoting "parents take students to work" programs;
- increasing the exposure that teachers have to other types of employment by requiring them to have other employment experience or encouraging them to participate in job shadowing programs;
- reducing the academic requirements for high school graduation;
- providing students with incentives to be more involved with employers;
- mandating employer involvement on school boards;
- encouraging student-run businesses;
- encouraging schools to hold regular student seminars on different careers; and,
- requiring partnerships to be tailored to the curriculum.

The matter of some partnership opportunities not being appropriate as part of a public education program because of the politics, ethics or activities of potential employer partners was also addressed. The preferred approaches for dealing with this issue are for Alberta Education to develop partnership guidelines, principals or teachers be given the authority to select suitable employer partners, and for school boards to establish partner selection criteria. The least favoured options are for school boards to be involved in the actual selection of partners and for students to screen employers. These findings are shown in Figure 23.

FIGURE 23

Appropriateness of Approaches to Identifying Suitable Employer Partners



Percentage equates to percent of respondents assigning 4 (appropriate) or 5 (very appropriate) to the approach.

Further analysis of the survey responses indicate some differences in the opinions of the various respondent groups about the screening of potential employer partners:

- educators are more supportive than the employer respondents of school boards selecting partners (49% of the educator respondents consider this to be an appropriate approach as compared to 29% of the employer respondents);

- educators are more supportive than the employer respondents of principals or teachers having the authority to select partners (78% of educator respondents feel this would be appropriate as compared to 46% of the business respondents);

- students are more supportive than any of the other respondent groups of student involvement in the screening of employers and less supportive of the provision of guidelines by Alberta Education and school boards establishing selection criteria.

Other suggested approaches to deal with the matter of potentially unsuitable partners included:

- having the selection made by teachers and students; parents and students; or, students, educators and parents;

- having business groups (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, professional associations) review potential partners;

- establishing a partnership clearing house or having a partnership coordinator;

- having employers, parents, school boards, schools, students, and Alberta Education involved in the establishment of guidelines;

- having employer partners establish a code of ethics and then screen potential employer partners;

- having partners selected by school boards and Alberta Education;

- requiring potential employer partners to be bondable;

- allowing students/student councils to select partners; and,

- involving the local community in the identification of suitable employer partners.

One of the concerns about employer involvement in education is the fact that some of the messages that students could receive through cooperative education programs may not be appropriate because of the lack of balance given to alternative beliefs, attitudes and values. Approximately two-thirds of the questionnaire respondents consider that it would be appropriate for a policy to be in place to ensure that students receive a balanced perspective and that parental permission be required prior to the participation of students in cooperative education programs. However, there are some differences in opinion regarding the appropriateness of these approaches: employers are less supportive than the other respondent groups of policies to ensure that students receive a balanced perspective; students and employers are less supportive than educators and the public of requiring parental permission prior to participation.

Other suggested approaches to ensure that students receive balanced messages included:

- ensure that balance is provided in the classroom;
- monitor the messages that students receive through participation in cooperative education programs;
- require a Career and Technology Studies course on business deception;
- discuss the need for balance with employers;
- have in place Alberta Education guidelines on balance;
- nurture the critical thinking skills of students; and,
- expose students with a variety of experiences to provide balance.

Opinions regarding the appropriateness of employer involvement in education having promotional messages in addition to educational messages (e.g. employers offering tours and free samples) and employer sponsorships were also addressed as part of this consultation process.

It was found that there are mixed views about whether government should be concerned with partnerships that may have a promotional component: 48% of respondents feel that government should be concerned about such partnerships; 39% feel that government should not be concerned; and 13% do not know if government should be concerned. A higher proportion of the educator and public respondents than employer and student respondents are of the opinion that this should be a concern of government. (The percentage of each respondent group that feel that this should be a concern of government is as follows: educators 71%, public 62%, employers 45%, and students 45%).

There are also mixed views about whether sponsorship by employers should be controlled or limited in the school system. Overall, roughly one-half of the respondents are of the opinion that it should be. Thirty-seven per cent of the respondents feel that sponsorship should not be controlled or limited and 12% do not know if it should be controlled or limited. Again, the cross-tabulations indicate differences in the opinions of the various respondent groups in regard to this matter: approximately 70% of both the public and educator respondents believe that sponsorship by employers should be controlled or limited as compared to approximately 50% of the employer respondents and 40% of the student respondents.

APPENDIX A

General Comments Made by Respondents

General Comments Provided at the end of Section A of the Questionnaire

Topic/Issue 1: Communication and Understanding Between Business/Employers and Education

% of respondents commenting	
2%	The business community should assist schools in providing students with information about their needs and desired employability skills of students.
3%	Better communication/cooperation between business and schools needed.
1%	Educational institutions can assist employers in understanding employees educational needs and commitments.
<1%	Teachers should be provided with an opportunity work in business through exchange program so that they can better teach students the necessary business skills.
<1%	School policies, hours conflict with the needs of business.
<1%	Educators are not interested in cooperating with business.
<1%	Small business doesn't have time to worry about prospective employees.
1%	Employers must see an advantage in being involved in partnerships and their needs must be accommodated in partnerships that are flexible.
<1%	If business is going to place demands on the educational system they must be prepared to provide assistance, e.g. funding.
<1%	Both levels of education (K-12 and post-secondary) must comuniciate and cooperate.
<1%	Educators need to go beyond academic standings and ranking of abilities.
<1%	The education system cannot be put in a position of relying on business support as the support often depends on one person and may falter when person leaves the organization.
<1%	Educators need to be aware of business goals.
<1%	The education system must answer to parents not business.
<1%	Educators do not have time or the ability to teach "everything". Parents, employers, the community must play a part in preparing students for the world of work.
1%	Business should not be involved in education/involvement should be strictly limited/not be allowed to influence students/schools.

Topic/Issue 2: Business Involvement in Education Policy-Making

1%	Input from business in the education system/curriculum development should be welcomed.
<1%	Employers should be represented on provincial boards.
2%	Involvement of employers in the education sytem is welcome but not with respect to curriculum development/program design.
1%	Changes to the education system and establishing guidelines are necessary but should be at the provincial level and not just at the school level.
1%	Concerns about unbalanced employer input, business only one of many voices.
<1%	Employers' input into school curriculum should be solicited through research studies involving numerous employers so that all industries/sectors are represented.

Topic/Issue 3: Employability Skills

1%	Students need to learn discipline and respect.
1%	The education system must focus more on providing students with basic skills such as communication, math, spelling, etc.
<1%	Schools have taken a step backwards by stressing academics.
<1%	Less emphasis should be put on university entrance/academics and more on basic knowledge and skills.
<1%	Today's students lack both business and academic skills.
<1%	Spelling, writing and other communication skills need to be emphasized starting in elementry school.
<1%	Students need to be prepared to take responsibility for their actions and their life.
1%	Parents together with the student should be responsible for a student's academic success, work experience, social well-being, etc.
<1%	Parents are responsible for nurturing healthly attitudes, social skills, etc. in their children.
<1%	Students need a say in their educations.
3%	Schools must educate students rather than train them for a job so that the students can make career choices/change career paths.
2%	Employers must take responsibility for specific job skills, too often they want schools to do it all.
<1%	Required number of hours in work experience courses interferes with academic studies.
<1%	More emphasis should be placed on "volunteerism" as opposed to "jobs" to acquire work experience.
<1%	Required courses leave no time for work experience.

Topic/Issue 4: The Value of Trade, Service and Technical Careers (Knowledge Workers) and Related Education Programs

2%	Apprenticeship programs should be expanded to high school/ vocational careers choices should be made more attractive.
4%	Partnerships/work experience for students are beneficial.
1%	Programs need to focus on at-risk-students, e.g. those that don't care or understand the work place.
1%	Post-secondary education of some type is essential today.
1%	High school should be a 4 year program, so that students can acquire work experience/ vocational training in the last year.
1%	Work experience programs should be integrated into school day (e.g. co-op model).
<1%	CALM has not met expectations/is a waste of time.
1%	Curriculum needs updating to include technolology and business studies.
<1%	CTS is a step in the right direction.
<1%	Schools should not overlook the opportunities to form partnerships in the hospitality sector, with family run businesses.
<1%	Remuneration of high school students for work experience is unnecessary.
<1%	It is essential that the contact person from the school keeps in touch with employer to ensure proper training.
<1%	Further education should not be discouraged.
1%	Work experience programs are fine for some students but not for all students.
<1%	It would be better to emulate the Austrian rather than the Mexican workforce model.

Topic/Issue 5: Part-Time Jobs

<1%	Teachers should be made aware of students' part-time jobs.
<1%	Teachers do not have a right to know about student employment.
1%	Part-time employment hinders academic success.
<1%	If employer has access to student records he will necessarily become involved with the education system.

Topic/Issue 6: Career Counselling

1%	Students need to be better advised about the work force in terms of expectations, pay, necessary skills and attitudes to succeed.
3%	Students need to be aware of employment opportunities, trends, how to make money and be prepared for change.
<1%	Students are too young to make career choices in junior high and high school.

Topic/Issue 8: Equity/Coordinating Business Involvement

<1%	Government has a role to play in ensuring equity among school boards, establish guidelines.
<1%	Legislation about number of hours students can work required.
1%	Concerns that initiative may do nothing more than create a larger bureaucracy
2%	Use incentives, and information rather than force educational partnerships with business.
<1%	Businesses are more willing to participate in "non-financial" agreements.
<1%	Provincial government should establish some partnership guidelines.
1%	Partnership guidelines must be clearly defined for all participants.
<1%	Not all partnerships need to be business orientated.
1%	Concerns about rural/urban inequities, e.g. rural communities don't have as much access to business as urban communities.
<1%	Government should provide assistance (e.g. funding) in order to establish partnerships.
1%	Safeguards are necessary to ensure against exploitation of student, e.g. cheap labour.
<1%	Advertising of business services/products should be allowed in schools.
<1%	Government should provide sufficient funding to schools so partnerships are unnecessary.
<1%	Government should not interfere in partnerships.

Other Comments

<1%	The business sector has failed to provide adequate jobs for students.
<1%	Extra-curricular activities are important in a students' development.
<1%	Money would have been better spent getting employer into the classroom to talk about the work force.
1%	Partnerships should possibly be with parents/community instead of business.
<1%	Poor educators results in students with bad attitudes
<1%	Some students are on track, survey focus appears to be on those that are not.
<1%	Need job creation.
<1%	Reward academic achievement.
<1%	Schools doing a good job considering the budgets they have to work with.
<1%	Survey biased/hidden agenda.
<1%	Require students to complete an aptitude test.
<1%	Concern about impact cutbacks are having on class size/teachers.
<1%	Social systems needs addressing so kids from poor families can get an education.

General Comments Provided at the End of Section B of the Questionnaire

Topic/Issue 1: Communication and Understanding Between Business/Employers and Education

% of respondents commenting	
1%	School teachers need to be better informed about business and businesses needs.
1%	Schools should educate, employers should train.
1%	Partnerships are very time consuming and require dedication from all those involved.
1%	Employers can't expect teachers to understand their needs.
<1%	Schools be more committed to partnerships and allow students more time for work experience.
<1%	Employers are needed in the schools to teach.
1%	School didn't make much use of partnership/could have been better developed.
<1%	The education system needs to keep up with technology.
<1%	Employers are having to teach new employees basic communication, team work and life skills and work ethic. Schools should be teaching students these skills.
<1%	Employers should be more involved in CTS.
<1%	Teachers and employers lack confidence in each others' abilities.
4%	Partnerships are benefical to students, community and business.

Topic/Issue 2: Business Involvement in Education Policy-Making

1%	Need to take a long term approach regarding education and business involvement.

Topic/Issue 3: Employability Skills

1%	Student lacks basic skills.
1%	The education system should teach business skills/incorporate work experience into the curriculum.
1%	Students need to develop a good work ethic and realistic expectations.
<1%	A link between high school and the work place is needed.
1%	Timing is an issue for work experience programs. Often students are not available when there is meaningful work for them and vice versus.

Topic/Issue 4: The Value of Trade, Service and Technical Careers (Knowledge Workers) and Related Education Programs

<1%	Alberta needs extensive specialized work/education business degree program.
<1%	Progams need to be developed for those students who will not be going to University.
<1%	Would like to provide work experience for junior high student as they are more likely to apprentice.

Topic/Issue 5: Part-Time Jobs

<1%	Employers should have access to student school attendance records, as this is a good indication of their work ethic.

Topic/Issue 6: Career Counselling

1%	Students must be informed about needs and expectations of business.

Topic/Issue 8: Equity/Coordinating Business Involvement

3%	Getting business to become more involved in education is a worthwhile initiative.
<1%	Employers' must be screened carefully to avoid students having negative experiences .
<1%	Concern that iniative may create more of a bureaucracy.
<1%	The education system and business do not have the time or money to spend on uncommitted students.
<1%	Business needs assurances that partnerships will not be costly in terms of dollars and time.
1%	Partnerships cannot be forced/must be voluntary.
<1%	No interest/need in forming partnerships with the education system.
<1%	Inequities between large and small school jurisdictions regarding the provision of equipment for training needs to be addressed.
<1%	Guidelines for partnerships should first be established by Alberta Education in consultation with post-secondary institutes.
<1%	Parent group involvement will be helpful in balancing partnerships.
<1%	Partnerships require overwhelming time commitments from schools.
<1%	Employers are not currently committed to providing training and will need incentives.

Other Comments

<1%	Partnerships will die if upper management doesn't participate, employees can't carry the burden.
<1%	Students should be paid to go to school.
<1%	A balance between work, school, leisure activities, and family needs to be maintained.

General Comments Provided at the End of Section C of the Questionnaire

Topic/Issue 1: Communication and Understanding Between Business/Employers and Education

% of respondents commenting	
<1%	Business and education goals are opposed.
1%	Teachers need to be kept informed about the needs of business/employability skills.
<1%	Teachers are out of touch with the world of work.
<1%	A common set of expections is needed for teachers, employers and students.
<1%	Business must be educated and kept informed about school curriculum/how to deal with students.
<1%	Concerns about balancing input from employers and education.
1%	Welcomes input from business.
<1%	Changes to the education system are necesary to have a competent future work force.
<1%	School councils can help to facilitate student preparedness for the world of work.

Topic/Issue 2: Business Involvement in Education Policy-Making

<1%	Concerned that business and not parents, educators and students will set agenda.

Topic/Issue 3: Employability Skills

3%	Schools should provide an education not training.
1%	The education system's purpose is not only to provide work skills.
<1%	High school graduates are capable of entering the work force.
1%	Work experience should be mandatory for secondary students.
1%	Work experience programs are beneficial to all participants.
<1%	Concerned that training provided to students may not be meaningful.
1%	Work experience should be incorporated in the school day.

Topic/Issue 4: The Value of Trade, Service and Technical Careers (Knowledge Workers) and Related Education Programs

1%	Students need to acquire business and technology knowledge/experience.
1%	Employer involvement can make school more meaningful to some students through speaking engagements, work shadowing, tutoring, etc.
<1%	Partnerships work best if they are between teachers and employers.

Topic/Issue 5: Part-Time Jobs

<1%	The work load of academic students makes it difficult for them to work.
<1%	Parents should be responsible for student part-time employment.
<1%	Part-time work lowers grades/excludes students from scholarships.

Topic/Issue 6: Career Counselling

<1%	Career counselling should start in Junior High so students can make better course choices when they get to High School

Topic/Issue 8: Equity/Coordinating Business Involvement

1%	Partnerships should not be mandatory as small communities have limited access to business.
1%	Concerned about creating a 2-tier education system.
1%	Concerns about inequities between rural and urban opportunities in terms of access to business.
<1%	All students should have equal opportunity to become involved in work experience programs
<1%	More support (financial) from provincial government for partnerships is needed.
<1%	Concerned about creating a larger bureacracy.
<1%	Alberta Education must provide funds, set guidelines, provide opportunities for schools to become involved with business.
<1%	Partnerships between elementary schools and business are inappropriate.
1%	Concerned about commercialization/student exploitation.
2%	Have had successful partnership with business.
<1%	Not all partnerships need to be with a business, e.g. professional associations would be beneficial.
<1%	Partnerships are very time consuming and business, especially small business, may not have time to devote to the partnership.
<1%	Guidelines/code of ethics needed to protect students.
<1%	In small community businesses are not interested in forming partnerships/becoming involved with the school system.

Other Comments

<1%	Survey biased/predetermined agenda.
<1%	Larger social problem cause of students lack of preparedness for the work force.

APPENDIX B

Summary of Written Submissions to the MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration in Education

NOTE: ***This synthesis contains either direct quotations or paraphrased excerpts from the written submissions.***

Topic/Issue 1: Communication and Understanding between Employers and Educators

Alberta Teachers' Association

- The association challenges the contention that business constitutes a major stakeholder in education -- while business has an understandable interest in education, it must see the obvious contradiction between its demand, on the one hand, to be exempted from taxes, and its desire, on the other, to shape the education of all the public's children.
- The association challenges the view that schools are failing.
- The association believes that such attacks have very little to do with a concern about the welfare of students and a great deal to do with the profit margins of businesses and corporations.
- On average, employers have little understanding of the problems facing teachers in today's classrooms.
- Because the needs of employers vary markedly, depending on the nature of their operation, teachers have difficulty understanding them except in very general terms.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- Question 4 implies that inadequacies in job performance are the result of education.
- The province should work with teachers and business leaders to specify clear performance objectives for students.
- Schools, in collaboration with business, should serve as the main agent of the assessment of accomplishment of performance objectives by students.
- With the help of business leaders, schools should define more clearly what specific skills students require for a specific job.
- Schools should work closely with the work site to list the skills available at that location.

Topic/Issue 2: Business Involvement in Educational Policy-Making

Alberta Teachers' Association

- The document offers no evidence to explain how the mere existence of an education-business partnership will either make the school system operate more efficiently or improve the achievement levels of students.

- Nor does the document explain how enhancing the performance of the school system will render Alberta businesses more competitive.

- The association believes that society should play a major role in defining the aims of education. For this reason the Association has, for years, urged the government to establish curriculum and policy advisory boards whose members represent a broad range of societal interests, including those of the business community.

- From the point of view of meeting the needs of children, agencies concerned with such issues as social welfare, health and justice would rank much higher than business in terms of their appropriateness for representation on school councils.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- Open curriculum development and planning to business input.

- Local consultation at the school level.

- Advisory function at provincial level.

- Provincial policy should be end-focused rather than detail-specific.

- Should focus on community involvement, with business being a significant player.

- What initiative has business taken to be involved with schools? For the most part is has come from schools.

- The paper and questions lead to the impression that business will be involved in presentation of the curriculum -- we are not truly being asked if this is appropriate.

- We have concerns with the extent of involvement implied.

- What will be the preparation, certification and evaluation process for these (business) presenters?

- If these presentations are not successful, who will be held responsible for the dip on provincial achievement tests or diploma exams?

- We have concerns over the potential commercialization of the schools.

- Involvement of business ... needs to be governed by the ethical guidelines that are being developed by the Conference Board of Canada.

- Governments should be encouraging greater involvement of business, community organizations and employers with education.

Topic/Issue 3: Employability Skills

Alberta Teachers' Association

- Unless reading, writing and arithmetic skills are considered essential aspects of job readiness, the goal of public schooling is never to train students to perform specific jobs.

College of Alberta School Superintendents

- Schools need to ensure that students have the opportunity to develop employability skills such as those suggested by the Conference Board of Canada.
- A common criticism of students moving into the workplace is that they are insufficiently imbued with a strong work ethic. ...students absorb these attitudes from their social environment...schools need community support.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- Include work experience as a compulsory program.
- Communities must have a variety of experiences available.
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes must be generic enough to allow an individual flexibility when it comes to career decisions.
- A diploma should be an indicator to an employer that the individual is trainable, and nothing more.
- If work experience is to be made available, it should be offered as an alternative, not as an only choice -- it cannot be made mandatory -- not an option at elementary level.
- Students should be required to maintain employability skills portfolios.
- Business has not been developing jobs which require advanced training for graduates -- entry level jobs available are of the same variety as the menial jobs that students work in as part-time employees.
- We question the assertion that graduates are not prepared for the jobs available.
- The skills listed in Question 5 are necessary and are presently integrated in education.
- Work experience should remain an optional program.
- The province should continue to have definite requirements with regard to safety and work site criteria.
- Employability skills should be tied more closely to diploma requirements.
- Province should examine the research on job skills required for success in major industries.
- A code of ethics should be developed for each of the stakeholders involved in a partnership program.

- The province should integrate the *Employability Skills Portfolio; Creating Your Future*, processes into the school curriculum.

School Councils

- Job-specific skills fit only a narrowly-defined vocational model of education and do not otherwise have a place as one of the mandates of public education.
- Job-specific skills should be taught primarily by employers who will benefit from their application.

Topic/Issue 4: The Value of Trade, Service and Technical Careers

College of Alberta School Superintendents

- The prognosis is that the burgeoning fields of work are "knowledge work" and "service work".
- We need to create a culture which values development of the intellect.
- We need to build individuals with the emotional strength to become entrepreneurs.
- The provincial policy needs to be future oriented -- developing social attitudes and skills that support a changing economic base.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- Require off-campus education programming for high school graduation.
- Emphasis on applied academics in core subjects.
- Most students are encouraged to pursue academic high school programs with full complements of science and university level mathematics.
- In-class delivery of real world employment skills lacks realism for the students.
- Many parents and students are coming to terms with the reality of educational training and lack of opportunities upon graduation from university and college.
- Students should be required to enroll in more career and technology courses.
- Skills a student requires on work sites should be included in their employability skills portfolio.
- Schools should be encouraged to have public awareness and in-service programs stating what is available in the CTS program.

School Councils

- Enrolment in Career and Technology Studies should be encouraged but not made mandatory.

Topic/Issue 5: Part-Time Jobs

Alberta Teachers' Association

- Employers could be encouraged to recognized student achievement not only in terms of course work but in a variety of areas including participation in extracurricular activities.
- Employers should be encouraged to help students recognize that their 'job' is to be a student.

College of Alberta School Superintendents

- The part-time "after school" work experience of many students can support the attainment of educational objectives when businesses encourage students to be successful learners as well as successful employees.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- A majority of high school students are part-time employees of business while they are students -- these employers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the skills and abilities of their part-time employees.
- Business should be given an opportunity to "teach" students specific skills. It should not be the sole domain of the school.
- Flexible timetabling should be encouraged to facilitate the students' attendance at school and work.

School Councils

- School boards (not the province) should require that employers guarantee that part-time employees who are students maintain a certain academic standing as a condition of employment. The power and responsibility should never be placed with the employer whose self interest will interfere with the fair application of such a policy -- nor should the teacher be placed in the position of being seen as an interference in any student's employment.
- The school should present and maintain an academic report which in the context of the school board's established ground rules of school partnerships will be used to control such relationships.
- Students should be encouraged to generate a written contract in which they acknowledge to themselves the triumvirate of responsibility (self, school and employer). This could also be used to ensure that all roles are clarified for those involved.

Topic/Issue 6: Career Counselling

Alberta Teachers' Association

- Employers can provide information to student and parents via the school's guidance counsellor.

College of Alberta School Superintendents

- Schools have to have current information about employment prospects -- too little is invested in educational/career counselling.

- Counsellors must have information about emerging job trends, especially new jobs, by:
  - providing career updating information annually;
  - providing work experience and job shadowing;
  - providing work experience opportunities for teachers.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- The province should establish and fund Career Resource Centres similar to those of the Calgary Educational Partnership Foundation.

- More dialogue should be undertaken between staff and students about why students are taking the course so there is more connection between the course and the world of work.

School Councils

- Students should be encouraged to abandon preconceived roles in the workplace based on gender, race or social status.

Topic/Issue 7: Independent Lifelong Learning

Alberta Teachers' Association

- The association believes that students -- and ultimately society -- are best served by an educational system that focuses not on inculcating specific job-related skills but on fostering broad, cognitive skills such as the ability to formulate and solve problems, to communicate effectively and to work as a team. Such skills will enable students not only to function well in any workplace but also to continue to learn throughout life and to become productive citizens of a democratic society.

School Councils

- The lifelong learner who is expected to have multiple jobs/careers would be poorly served by job-specific education.

- We support an education that would produce self confident individuals endowed with the skills and creativity to succeed in whatever challenges might come their way.

Topic/Issue 8: Equity/Coordinating Business Involvement

Alberta Teachers' Association

- The association is bothered by the absence of any serious discussion about the prospect that businesses may be motivated more by a desire to influence future consumers than by a genuine interest in the welfare of students.

- A partnership clearinghouse would cost money to operate and would be no substitute for common sense.

- Schools would choose to establish partnerships only with businesses that are in reasonable proximity or that are accessible by means of technology.

- Employers should talk directly to principals and teachers. School boards should have policy in place to help principals decide whether a potential partnership is acceptable.

- Advertising in schools should be severely restricted.

- Teachers are already burdened with many supervisory responsibilities. To ensure the safety of students, a low student-supervisor ratio is desirable.

Schools and School Jurisdictions

- Equality needs to be maintained in all schools.

- If business is involved, we need to ensure equity among schools.

- Equity is a common argument that is used by educators resisting business involvement in education.

- Equity and coordination efforts could lead to watering down of business involvement.

- Schools and students should compete in a free and open market.

- A Career Education Foundation to foster business involvement in education would be good.

- Business involvement with schools should not be coordinated.

- No principals have the time to become more than peripherally involved in this exercise. If business involvement can provide time to accommodate partnership activities then there is a good chance it will increase.

- Principals have generally supported the initiatives of the Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Resources and the Conference Board of Canada who recognize that in a true partnership all the key participants have valuable contributions to make and that educators have not only relevant experience but a great deal of expertise in dealing with the needs of youth.

- Equality needs to be maintained in all schools.

- If business is involved, we need to ensure equity among schools.

- Consideration should be given by providing incentives to employers for getting involved with the local schools. Businesses could provide more up-to-date equipment, resources, and facilities to delivery specific educational programs for students that public schools cannot afford.

- Schools should be expected to carry out an inventory of potential workplace experiences.

- Inventories should be shared among schools.

- Business representatives should also get together to share their experiences.

- A provincial Career Education Foundation would be of value.

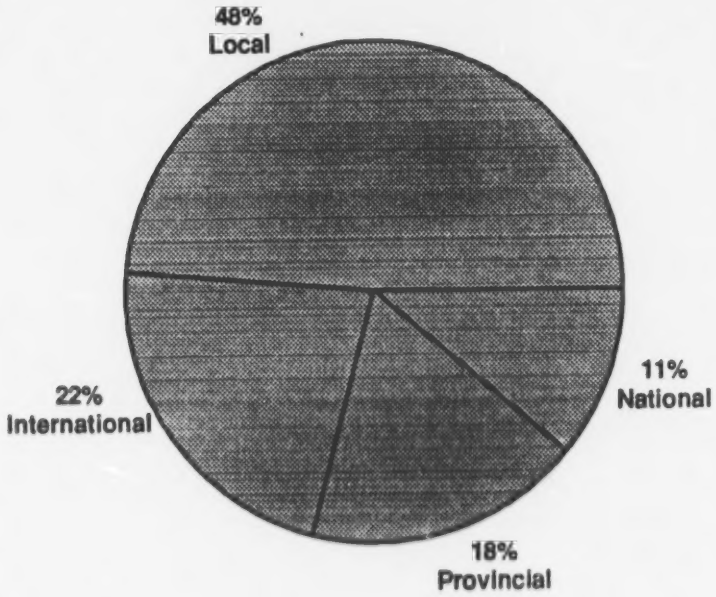
School Councils

- Partnerships should not be used for a major fundraising source. Business should provide more human resources and technical support -- not cash and equipment.
- School councils should be involved in the selection and operation of a partnership.
- There must be provincial, divisional and community rules and regulations on establishing and operating partnerships.
- Foundations may be set up to distribute large cash or equipment on a fair and equitable basis to the schools.
- Government may be able to appeal to the private sector for assistance but the control of education must remain within their mandate.
- By having business supply shared equipment, sponsorship, or off-campus learning, we will be allowing them to manipulate the types of education available to students in the future.
- Equity is a concern. Business involvement would have to be closely monitored to prevent the sudden closure of schools due to sudden interest (by a business) in another institution.
- Incentives must be so crafted as to avoid subsidizing employment by providing subsidies that may be appropriately exploited by businesses that might see this as an opportunity to pick up cheap labour. Incentives must only be provided to the educational, mentoring aspects of these relationships in order to not provide subsidized labour.
- We envisage the operation and control of business/education programs at the school board level to ensure an immediacy and responsibility that will reflect local needs and desires. Local government (school boards) should be making these decisions.
- The government should have a minimal role in all areas that can be best managed at the local level.
- A code of ethics for employers, parents, and educators is a must.

APPENDIX C

Profile of Employer Respondents

SCOPE OF OPERATIONS



TYPE OF INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY	%
Manufacturing	15%
Retail Trade	14%
Health and Social Service	14%
Mining, Quarrying and Oil Well	11%
Business Service	10%
Government Service	7%
Construction	5%
Communication and Other Utility	5%
Finance and Insurance	4%
Accommodation, Food and Beverage Service	4%
Wholesale Trade	3%
Membership Organizations	3%
Transportation and Storage	2%
Other Primary	1%
Education Service	1%
Real Estate Operator and Insurance Agent	1%
Other Service	1%
	100%[1]

SIZE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN ALBERTA	%
0 - 20 employees	28%
21 - 50 employees	19%
51 - 100 employees	11%
101 - 500 employees	21%
over 500 employees	22%
	100%[1]

[1] Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX D

Survey Instrument

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Alberta believes that students, schools, businesses, employers and the community at large would benefit from closer relationships among all partners involved in preparing our youth to meet the challenges of the future. The potential benefits include:

- increased relevancy to students of their learning in school
- enhanced preparation of Alberta students to enter and be successful in the work force
- increased confidence of employers in the education system's ability to meet their employee needs with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes
- increased competitiveness for Alberta business.

THE MLA IMPLEMENTATION TEAM AND THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

Education Minister Halvar Jonson established an MLA Implementation Team on Business Involvement and Technology Integration in Education in November, 1994. The team is chaired by Denis Herard, MLA for Calgary Egmont, and includes Hung Pham, MLA for Calgary Montrose.

The Implementation Team has been working on two distinctive issues, technology integration and business involvement. This questionnaire focuses on business involvement in education; a separate questionnaire and discussion paper relating to technology integration was distributed previously.

Over the past year, the MLA team has been working with an advisory group of business and educational stakeholders to identify issues relating to the relationship between business and schools in Alberta.

Recognizing the contribution that a stronger relationship between our business and education sectors could make to improving student learning and to the quality of life in our province, the MLA Implementation Team is now working with the Advisory Group on Business Involvement in Education to seek public input **to determine what the government's policy should be**.

This questionnaire is part of the consultation that is taking place between the MLA Implementation Team and the various stakeholders in the province who have an interest in the involvement of business in our education system. During October, 1995 this questionnaire is being broadly distributed to Alberta businesses, school councils, students, schools and other partners.

The MLA Implementation Team encourages you—and all other Albertans who want to provide suggestions for strengthening our education system through fostering a closer relationship between our education and business communities—to complete and submit the attached questionnaire to the MLA Implementation Team by **November 3, 1995**.

WRITTEN BRIEFS WELCOME

If you would prefer, you are also welcome to prepare a written submission about business involvement in education for the consideration of the MLA Implementation Team. If you choose to provide your input in this way, please forward your submission to the MLA Implementation Team by **November 3**. Send your response to:

Denis Herard, MLA Calgary Egmont
Chairman, MLA Implementation Team
Business Involvement and Technology Integration in Education
513 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6
Fax: 403–427–1835
Internet: businv@edc.gov.ab.ca

DEFINITIONS

In this consultation process, **business** is being defined very broadly. It includes **private sector, for-profit firms, not-for-profit organizations,** such as the Red Cross, Boys and Girls Clubs and the YMCA; and **public sector organizations,** such as hospitals and governments at all levels. All of these businesses are employers of high school graduates and have a stake in the education and career training of students from Early Childhood Services to Grade 12 in Alberta.

A **partnership** may be defined as a formal, long-term, mutually beneficial relationship between a business, agency or organization that employs individuals, and a school.

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The appendix contains additional background information about the involvement of business in education in Alberta, which you may find useful in completing the questionnaire or preparing your written submission.

FUTURE REPORTS

You are invited to provide your name and address below. This information will be used for no other purpose than to create a mailing list so that you receive future reports produced by Alberta Education relating to *Business Involvement in Education*. You may either enclose this with your completed questionnaire or send it under separate cover to the above address.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is divided into 3 sections with questions in each section designed to gather information from different groups of respondents. Section A is intended to be completed by all respondents, while Section B contains questions for businesses, and Section C contains questions for educators. You are welcome to respond to any and all sections of the questionnaire if you wish. We ask, however, that everyone complete Section A.

SECTION A: QUESTIONS FOR ALL RESPONDENTS

1. a) Does this questionnaire represent the response of:
   (___) 1 an individual or an employer (except schools or school boards) [GO TO QUESTION 2]
   (___) 2 a group or organization (including business groups, schools, school boards, parent groups, educational groups)

   b) If a group, please indicate:
   i) Name of organization _____
   ii) Address _____
   _____
   iii) Contact person and phone number _____ _____
   iv) Number represented by group _____
   v) Description of group _____

2. For individual respondents or employers, **please check all that apply**. Are you:
   (___) 1 a future parent
   (___) 2 a parent of preschoolers
   (___) 3 a parent with children in school
   (___) 4 a parent whose children are no longer in school (Early Childhood Services to Grade 12)
   (___) 5 a student in high school
   (___) 6 a student in a post-secondary institution
   (___) 7 an educator
   (___) 8 an owner or operator of a business or business unit, or an operator of a public sector organization
   a) How many employees are you responsible for? ..... _____

3. What are the first three digits of your postal code? ..... ___ ___ ___
   [BUSINESS RESPONDENTS: PLEASE USE YOUR BUSINESS POSTAL CODE]

4. In each of the following areas, how well-prepared are students who complete high school and are joining the work force for the first time? Please indicate your response on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all prepared and 5 is very well prepared.

		Not at all prepared				Very well prepared	Not applicable/ don't know
a)	communication skills (read, write, listen, understand)	1	2	3	4	5	6
b)	thinking skills (logic, problem-solving, research, analysis, critical thinking, creativity)	1	2	3	4	5	6
c)	teamwork skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
d)	job-specific skills (e.g., welding, hair styling)	1	2	3	4	5	6
e)	physical, mental and social well-being	1	2	3	4	5	6
f)	an understanding of good citizenship	1	2	3	4	5	6
g)	competence to respond to the opportunities and expectations of the world of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
h)	positive attitude toward lifelong learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	acceptance of responsibility for own actions	1	2	3	4	5	6
j)	respect for the ideas and beliefs of others	1	2	3	4	5	6
k)	abilities to make moral and ethical decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6
l)	understanding and appreciation of entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5	6
m)	communication and computer technology skills common to many jobs (keyboarding, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
n)	other (please specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

5. Given the changes that you may expect over the next 5 to 15 years in the workplace, what priority should be given, by the educational community, to each of the following areas in the future?

		Low priority				High priority
a)	communication skills (read, write, listen, understand)	1	2	3	4	5
b)	thinking skills (logic, problem-solving, research, analysis, critical thinking, creativity)	1	2	3	4	5
c)	teamwork skills	1	2	3	4	5
d)	job-specific skills (e.g., welding, hair styling)	1	2	3	4	5
e)	physical, mental and social well-being	1	2	3	4	5
f)	an understanding of good citizenship	1	2	3	4	5
g)	competence to respond to the opportunities and expectations of the world of work	1	2	3	4	5
h)	positive attitude toward lifelong learning	1	2	3	4	5
i)	acceptance of responsibility for own actions	1	2	3	4	5
j)	respect for the ideas and beliefs of others	1	2	3	4	5
k)	abilities to make moral and ethical decisions	1	2	3	4	5
l)	understanding and appreciation of entrepreneurship	1	2	3	4	5
m)	communication and computer technology skills common to many jobs (keyboarding, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
n)	other (please specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5

6. Are there other desirable knowledge, skills, and attitudes that high school students should possess to meet future needs of employers? What are they?

_____ ....

_____ ....

_____ ....

_____ ....

_____ ....

_____ ....

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		Yes	No	Don't know
7. a)	Should employers be more involved in education?	1	2	3
b)	Should government attempt to encourage employers to become more involved in education?	1	2	3

c) If you answered "yes" to Question 7b, how appropriate would you consider each of the following options open to government to encourage **employers** to become more involved in education?

		Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
i)	legislate it as a requirement of employers	1	2	3	4	5
ii)	provide incentives (e.g., tax incentives)	1	2	3	4	5
iii)	provide information regarding the long-term advantages to employers	1	2	3	4	5
iv)	provide information about approaches used in other jurisdictions	1	2	3	4	5
v)	other (please specify) _____					
vi)	other (please specify) _____					
vii)	other (please specify) _____					
viii)	other (please specify) _____					
ix)	other (please specify) _____					

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8. The following are options that the provincial government could use to encourage the education sector to become more involved with employers. Which of these would you consider to be appropriate?

		Yes	No	Don't know
a)	requiring school board policy on employer partnerships	1	2	3
b)	making student involvement at a workplace compulsory	1	2	3
c)	establish a code of ethics (what partnerships are/are not acceptable)	1	2	3
d)	provide funding incentives	1	2	3
e)	provide for consultative advice	1	2	3
f)	require students to maintain a file of samples of their work demonstrating the skills they offer to employers	1	2	3
g)	other (please specify) _____			
h)	other (please specify) _____			
i)	other (please specify) _____			
j)	other (please specify) _____			
k)	other (please specify) _____			

9. Not all partnership opportunities may be appropriate as part of public education by virtue of the politics, ethics or activities of the employer partner. In these circumstances, how appropriate would you rate each of the following approaches to dealing with this problem?

		Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
a)	selection left to school boards	1	2	3	4	5
b)	selection left to principals or teachers	1	2	3	4	5
c)	screening of employers by parent groups or school councils	1	2	3	4	5
d)	screening of employers by students	1	2	3	4	5
e)	provision of guidelines by Alberta Education	1	2	3	4	5
f)	school boards establish selection criteria	1	2	3	4	5
g)	other (please specify) _____					
h)	other (please specify) _____					
i)	other (please specify) _____					
j)	other (please specify) _____					
k)	other (please specify) _____					

10. Not all of the messages that students could receive through cooperative education programs may be appropriate because of the lack of balance given to alternative beliefs, attitudes or values. For example, a firm may wish to discuss the merits of its business without discussing its environmental costs. In these circumstances, how appropriate would you rate each of the following approaches to dealing with this problem?

		Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
a)	policy to ensure students receive a balanced perspective	1	2	3	4	5
b)	require parental permission prior to participation	1	2	3	4	5
c)	other (please specify) _____					

11. Some partnerships may not involve exclusively educational messages to students but, instead, are also promotional; e.g., tours and free samples. Should government be concerned about such situations?

	Yes	No	Don't know
	1	2	3

12. Some involvement of employers in schools is of a sponsorship nature; e.g., sponsored scoreboards in school gymnasiums. Should sponsorship by employers be controlled or limited in the school system?

	1	2	3

13. If a number of good employer partnering opportunities exist but time or resources will permit only one, how appropriate would each of the following options be for selecting the preferred opportunity?

		Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
a)	best learning opportunity as selected by educators	1	2	3	4	5
b)	student preferences	1	2	3	4	5
c)	timing or receipt of application (first qualified applicant is selected)	1	2	3	4	5
d)	random draw	1	2	3	4	5
e)	other (specify) _____					
f)	other (specify) _____					

14. There may be a concern that too many schools will be pursuing partnering relationships with the same employers. If this were to happen, do you think that those employers might reduce or eliminate their involvement in education partnerships?

	Yes	No	Don't know
	1	2	3

15. If it was to happen that too many schools were pursuing the same employers, do you think it would be appropriate for an agency to be established to act as a clearing house for education partnerships?

	1	2	3

16. Should employers be represented on provincial boards or agencies addressing:

a) educational curriculum	1	2	3	
b) educational policy	1	2	3	

17. A high percentage of students in high school **plan** to go to university, however, a much smaller percentage actually enter **any** post-secondary institution immediately after high school. This results in a large number of students entering the work force before they planned to do so. How appropriate do you feel each of the following public education strategies is related to this issue?

	Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
a) provide basic job-readiness training to all high school students	1	2	3	4	5
b) provide basic job-readiness training to high school students who do not plan to attend a post-secondary institution	1	2	3	4	5
c) provide summer school job-readiness programs that start after students are aware of the status of their post-secondary applications	1	2	3	4	5
d) do nothing	1	2	3	4	5
e) require all students to have a minimum number of hours of work experience	1	2	3	4	5

f) other (please specify) _____
g) other (please specify) _____
h) other (please specify) _____
i) other (please specify) _____
j) other (please specify) _____

18. Do you consider it appropriate for schools to become involved in assisting employers (e.g., developing staff training programs) under the following terms:

	Yes	No	Don't know
a) on a fee for service basis	1	2	3
b) as part of a larger reciprocal agreement	1	2	3
c) no cost to business in order to generate good will	1	2	3

19. Sometimes the part-time employment of students conflicts with their programs of study. Do you think that employers would be prepared to help educators establish the students' programs of study as a higher priority than part-time employment?

	1	2	3

20. How would you rate the appropriateness of the following strategies by which employers could assist in establishing schooling as a higher priority for students employed part-time?

	Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
a) employers require part-time employees who are students to maintain a certain academic standing as a condition of employment	1	2	3	4	5
b) employers require a letter from a teacher indicating that part-time work will likely not negatively affect studies	1	2	3	4	5
c) employers notify schools of the name of their part-time staff so schools could be aware of students' jobs	1	2	3	4	5
d) employers should not do anything	1	2	3	4	5
e) employers recognize and reward academic achievement	1	2	3	4	5

f) other (please specify) _____
g) other (please specify) _____
h) other (please specify) _____

21. The following have been suggested as ways of improving the integration of employer needs into schools and thereby helping to ease the transition of students from school to work. How appropriate are each of the following?

	Not at all appropriate				Very appropriate
a) including employer representation on school councils	1	2	3	4	5
b) including employer representation on provincial curriculum advisory groups	1	2	3	4	5
c) having employers provide advisory services to teachers related to expectations of employers	1	2	3	4	5
d) providing parents and students with information about employment trends	1	2	3	4	5

e) other (please specify) _____

f) other (please specify) _____

General Comments:

SECTION B: QUESTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

1. a) To what extent are the expectations that employers have for the public education system known and understood by the educational community? Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all understood and 5 is very well understood. 1 2 3 4 5 6

   (Not at all understood ... Very well understood; Don't know)

   b) How well do teachers understand the needs of employers? 1 2 3 4 5 6

   (Not at all understood ... Very well understood; Don't know)

2. Is there a common understanding among employers of the expectations that employers have of the educational community? ..... Yes 1 No 2 Don't know 3

3. Is your organization interested in becoming more involved with the school system in any of the following areas? For each area in which you would be interested in becoming more involved, please indicate which grades of students you would be interested in working with.

   (Multiple Responses Permitted)

		ECS–6	7–9	10–12
a)	advisory role in policy development relating to directions, outputs and standards	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
b)	advisory role in curriculum development	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
c)	student field trips	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
d)	cooperative work experience	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
e)	teacher secondment into your organization	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
f)	provide guest lecturer in a school	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
g)	your staff secondment to a school to teach	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
h)	provide funding to a school on "earmarked" or general basis	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
i)	donation or loan of equipment to schools	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
j)	equipment sharing	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
k)	other (please specify)_____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
l)	other (please specify)_____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3

4. What other forms of involvement with the school system might be considered by your organization? What grades of students (e.g., ECS–6, 7–9, 10–12) would be appropriate for each?

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_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —
_____	— —

5. How should your organization's involvement in an educational partnership be solicited?

		Yes	No	Don't know
a)	brochures and mailings to local business units by local school boards	1	2	3
b)	regional networking with representatives of employer's interests; e.g., local Chamber of Commerce providing coordination	1	2	3
c)	requests from individual schools to individual business units	1	2	3
d)	lobbying of business groups or associations by government at a local, provincial or national level	1	2	3
e)	provincial educational media campaign of the benefits of partnering	1	2	3
f)	requests from other agencies acting as clearing houses for educational partnerships	1	2	3
g)	other (please specify) _____			
h)	other (please specify) _____			
i)	other (please specify) _____			

6. What follows is a listing of some of the potential negative consequences for employers of their increased involvement in education. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all a concern to employers, and 5 is a significant concern to employers, how much concern do you have regarding:

		Not at all a concern				Significant concern
a)	financial costs to employers of involvement with education	1	2	3	4	5
b)	time commitments of employers	1	2	3	4	5
c)	employee commitments	1	2	3	4	5
d)	safety of students on site	1	2	3	4	5
e)	safety of employees	1	2	3	4	5
f)	safety of customers	1	2	3	4	5
g)	liability	1	2	3	4	5
h)	supervision requirements	1	2	3	4	5
i)	evaluation of student performance	1	2	3	4	5
j)	training requirements	1	2	3	4	5
k)	union issues	1	2	3	4	5
l)	labour and employee relations	1	2	3	4	5
m)	wage-related issues	1	2	3	4	5
n)	impact on competitiveness of businesses participating	1	2	3	4	5
o)	impact on competitiveness of businesses not participating	1	2	3	4	5
p)	other (please specify) _____					
q)	other (please specify) _____					

7. a) At the local level, what group or organization currently represents the voice of employers in communicating needs to the education community? Which group or organization **should** take on that role?

		Currently represents voice of employers	Should represent voice of employers
i)	local Chambers of Commerce	(___)1	(___)1
ii)	Better Business Bureau	(___)2	(___)2
iii)	none	(___)3	(___)3
iv)	other (please specify) _____	(___)4	(___)4
v)	other (please specify) _____	(___)5	(___)5
vi)	other (please specify) _____	(___)6	(___)6

b) At the provincial level, what groups or organizations represent or should represent the voice of employers in communicating needs to the education community, and which group should take that role?

		Represents voice of employers	Should represent voice of employers
i)	Alberta Economic Development and Tourism (provincial government)	(___)1	(___)1
ii)	Alberta Chamber of Commerce	(___)2	(___)2
iii)	Conference Board of Canada	(___)3	(___)3
iv)	Canadian Federation of Independent Business	(___)4	(___)4
v)	Alberta Chamber of Resources	(___)5	(___)5
vi)	individual industry associations	(___)6	(___)6
vii)	Alberta Apprenticeship Board	(___)7	(___)7
viii)	none	(___)8	(___)8
ix)	other (please specify) _____	(___)9	(___)9
x)	other (please specify) _____	(___)10	(___)10
xi)	other (please specify) _____	(___)11	(___)11

8. a) What industry is your business unit in?

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_____ .... __ __

_____ .... __ __

b) Is your business:
(___) 1 local (include franchises)?
(___) 2 provincial?
(___) 3 national?
(___) 4 international?

c) Approximately how many employees does your organization have in Alberta? ..... __ __ __ __

d) Has your business unit been involved in partnerships with the public education sector?
(___) 1 yes
(___) 2 no

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If yes, please describe the most recent partnership.

_____ .... __ __

_____ .... __ __

e) Did you consider that most recent partnership to be:
(___) 1 valuable to the firm
(___) 2 valuable to the student(s)
(___) 3 valuable to both

General Comments

_____

_____

_____

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_____

SECTION C: QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATION COMMUNITY

1. To what extent are the expectations that employers have for the public education system known and understood by the educational community? Please answer on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all understood and 5 is very well understood.....

Not at all understood				Very well understood	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

2. How realistic are the expectations that employers have for the public education system? .....

Not at all realistic				Very realistic	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. How well do teachers understand the needs of employers? .....

Not at all understood				Very well understood	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Do you think there is a common understanding among employers of the expectations that employers should have of the educational community? .....

Yes	No	Don't know
1	2	3

5. How should employers approach educators to develop an educational partnership?

	Yes	No	Don't know
a) direct representations to teachers/principals	1	2	3
b) mailings to a number of schools in the region they are interested in.....	1	2	3
c) through a designated individual at each Board of Education	1	2	3
d) through a designated individual at Alberta Education.....	1	2	3
e) through agencies acting as clearing houses for educational partnerships	1	2	3

f) other (please specify) _____

g) other (please specify) _____

6. What follows is a list of potentially negative consequences for schools of their increased involvement with employers. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all a concern to schools, and 5 is a significant concern to schools, how much concern do you have regarding:

	Not at all a concern				Significant concern
a) influence business may have on students to buy a product.....	1	2	3	4	5
b) increased demands on time.....	1	2	3	4	5
c) transportation of students to work sites	1	2	3	4	5
d) scheduling and timetabling	1	2	3	4	5
e) involvement of employer in teaching process	1	2	3	4	5
f) safety of students on site	1	2	3	4	5
g) school's liability.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) supervision requirements.....	1	2	3	4	5

i) other (please specify) _____

j) other (please specify) _____

k) other (please specify) _____

General Comments

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION:

PUBLIC CONSULTATION FINDINGS

Prepared For:

The MLA Implementation Team on
Business Involvement and
Technology Integration

by

Nichols Education Consulting Group

December, 1995

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LC1049.8.C22A3.N617 1996 373.27

Other related documents:

- *Business Involvement in Education Literature Review*
- *Business Involvement in Education Public Consultation Findings*
- *Creating Independent and Interdependent Learners: Business and Education Working Together*
- *Framework for Enhancing Business Involvement in Education*
- *Partnerships Survey Report, 1995: School–Business Partnerships in Alberta*
- *Proceedings Report: Invitational Forum on Business Involvement in Education*

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FOREWORD

This technical appendix accompanies the main report on the findings of the public consultation process on business involvement in education. The appendix provides a summary tabulation of the survey data for those readers who wish to examine the survey results at a level of detail greater than is shown in the main report.

Table of Contents

1. Questionnaire Responses
2. Questionnaire

1. QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

SECTION A
Questions for All Respondents

A1A Represents response of:

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Individual or employer	1	566	71.2	71.8	71.8
Group or organization	2	222	27.9	28.2	100.0
	.	7	.9	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 788 Missing cases 7

- -

A1B5 Description of group

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
School	1	70	8.8	34.0	34.0
School Council	2	45	5.7	21.8	55.8
Business group/association	3	31	3.9	15.0	70.9
Community association	4	3	.4	1.5	72.3
Health care	5	4	.5	1.9	74.3
School association	6	5	.6	2.4	76.7
Post-secondary institution	7	12	1.5	5.8	82.5
School Division/Board	8	23	2.9	11.2	93.7
Local government	9	2	.3	1.0	94.7
Students	10	10	1.3	4.9	99.5
Student association	11	1	.1	.5	100.0
	.	589	74.1	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 206 Missing cases 589

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A2.1 a future parent

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	1	37	4.7	100.0	100.0
	.	758	95.2	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 37 Missing cases 758

- -

A2.2 a parent of preschoolers

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	2	61	7.7	100.0	100.0
	.	734	92.3	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 61 Missing cases 734

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A2.3 a parent with children in school

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	3	231	29.1	100.0	100.0
	.	564	70.9	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 231 Missing cases 564

- -

A2.4 a parent whose children are no longer in school

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	4	108	13.6	100.0	100.0
	.	687	86.4	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 108 Missing cases 687

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A2.5 a student in high school

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	5	118	14.8	100.0	100.0
	.	667	85.2	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 118 Missing cases 667

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A2.6 a student in a post-secondary institution

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	6	17	2.1	100.0	100.0
	.	778	97.9	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 17 Missing cases 778

- -

A2.7 an educator

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	7	148	18.6	100.0	100.0
	.	647	81.4	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 148 Missing cases 647

A2.8 owner/operator of a business/public sector organization

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
	8	280	35.2	100.0	100.0
	.	515	64.8	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 280 Missing cases 515

- -

A2.8A Number of employees responsible for

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
1-10	10	55	6.9	20.4	20.4
11-25	25	58	7.3	21.6	42.0
26-50	50	55	6.9	20.4	62.5
51-100	100	37	4.7	13.8	76.2
101+	101	64	8.1	23.8	100.0
	.	526	66.2	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 269 Missing cases 526

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A3 Location of respondent according to population, based on first three digits of postal code

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Population of 500,000+	1	285	35.8	38.5	38.5
Population of 25,000-500,000	2	140	17.6	18.9	57.4
Population less than 25,000	3	315	39.6	42.6	100.0
	.	55	6.9	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 740 Missing cases 55

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A4 How well-prepared are students who complete high school and are joining the work force for the first time?

A4A Communication skills

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	9	1.1	1.2	1.2
	2	113	14.2	14.5	15.7
	3	279	35.1	35.9	51.5
	4	256	32.2	32.9	84.4
Well prepared	5	68	8.6	8.7	93.2
Don't know	6	53	6.7	6.8	100.0
	.	17	2.1	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 778 Missing cases 17

A4B Thinking skills

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	16	2.0	2.1	2.1
	2	157	19.7	20.2	22.2
	3	313	39.4	40.2	62.5
	4	200	25.2	25.7	88.2
Well prepared	5	36	4.5	4.6	92.8
Don't know	6	56	7.0	7.2	100.0
	.	17	2.1	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 778 Missing cases 17

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A4C Teamwork skills

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	9	1.1	1.2	1.2
	2	126	15.8	16.3	17.5
	3	284	35.7	36.8	54.3
	4	224	28.2	29.1	83.4
Well prepared	5	65	8.2	8.4	91.8
Don't know	6	63	7.9	8.2	100.0
	.	24	3.0	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 771 Missing cases 24

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A4D Job-specific skills

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	74	9.3	9.7	9.7
	2	207	26.0	27.0	36.7
	3	198	24.9	25.8	62.5
	4	103	13.0	13.4	76.0
Well prepared	5	37	4.7	4.8	80.8
Don't know	6	147	18.5	19.2	100.0
	.	29	3.6	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 766 Missing cases 29

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A4E Physical, mental and social well-being

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	8	1.0	1.0	1.0
	2	83	10.4	10.8	11.8
	3	295	37.1	38.3	50.1
	4	267	33.6	34.6	84.7
Well prepared	5	59	7.4	7.7	92.3
Don't know	6	59	7.4	7.7	100.0
	.	24	3.0	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 771 Missing cases 24

A4F An understanding of good citizenship

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	26	3.3	3.4	3.4
	2	129	16.2	16.9	20.3
	3	245	30.8	32.1	52.4
	4	228	28.7	29.9	82.3
Well prepared	5	69	8.7	9.0	91.3
Don't know	6	66	8.3	8.7	100.0
	.	32	4.0	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 763 Missing cases 32

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A4G Competence to respond to opportunities and expectations of the world of work

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	37	4.7	4.8	4.8
	2	196	24.7	25.5	30.3
	3	278	35.0	36.2	66.4
	4	166	20.9	21.6	88.0
Well prepared	5	27	3.4	3.5	91.5
Don't know	6	65	8.2	8.5	100.0
	.	26	3.3	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 769 Missing cases 26

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A4H Positive attitude toward lifelong learning

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	38	4.8	4.9	4.9
	2	166	20.9	21.5	26.4
	3	245	30.8	31.7	58.1
	4	202	25.4	26.1	84.2
Well prepared	5	53	6.7	6.9	91.1
Don't know	6	69	8.7	8.9	100.0
	.	22	2.8	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 773 Missing cases 22

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A4I Acceptance of responsibility for own actions

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	36	4.5	4.7	4.7
	2	172	21.6	22.3	26.9
	3	270	34.0	34.9	61.8
	4	180	22.6	23.3	85.1
Well prepared	5	63	7.9	8.2	93.3
Don't know	6	52	6.5	6.7	100.0
	.	22	2.8	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 773 Missing cases 22

A4J Respect for the ideas beliefs of others

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	14	1.8	1.8	1.8
	2	111	14.0	14.3	16.1
	3	278	35.0	35.9	52.1
	4	249	31.3	32.2	84.2
Well prepared	5	61	7.7	7.9	92.1
Don't know	6	61	7.7	7.9	100.0
	.	21	2.6	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 774 Missing cases 21

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A4K Abilities to make moral and ethical decisions

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	25	3.1	3.2	3.2
	2	118	14.8	15.3	18.6
	3	289	36.4	37.5	56.1
	4	226	28.4	29.4	85.5
Well prepared	5	43	5.4	5.6	91.0
Don't know	6	69	8.7	9.0	100.0
	.	25	3.1	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 770 Missing cases 25

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A4L Understanding and appreciation of entrepreneurship

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	70	8.8	9.1	9.1
	2	239	30.1	31.2	40.3
	3	248	31.2	32.4	72.7
	4	102	12.8	13.3	86.0
Well prepared	5	22	2.8	2.9	88.9
Don't know	6	85	10.7	11.1	100.0
	.	29	3.6	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 766 Missing cases 29

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A4M Communication and computer technology skills

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Not at all prepared	1	13	1.6	1.7	1.7
	2	96	12.1	12.4	14.0
	3	208	26.2	26.8	40.9
	4	322	40.5	41.5	82.3
Well prepared	5	67	8.4	8.6	91.0
Don't know	6	70	8.8	9.0	100.0
	.	19	2.4	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 776 Missing cases 19

A5 **Given changes expected over the next 5 to 15 years in the workplace, what priority should be given by the educational community to the following areas?**

A5A **Communication skills**

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	1	.1	.1	.1
	2	4	.5	.5	.6
	3	32	4.0	4.1	4.7
	4	165	20.8	21.0	25.7
High priority	5	583	73.3	74.3	100.0
	.	10	1.3	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 785 Missing cases 10

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A5B **Thinking skills**

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	1	.1	.1	.1
	2	3	.4	.4	.5
	3	37	4.7	4.7	5.2
	4	187	23.5	23.8	29.0
High priority	5	557	70.1	71.0	100.0
	.	10	1.3	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 785 Missing cases 10

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A5C **Teamwork skills**

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	1	.1	.1	.1
	2	16	2.0	2.0	2.2
	3	135	17.0	17.3	19.4
	4	269	33.8	34.4	53.8
High priority	5	361	45.4	46.2	100.0
	.	13	1.6	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 782 Missing cases 13

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A5D **Job-specific skills**

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	69	8.7	8.8	8.8
	2	116	14.6	14.9	23.7
	3	274	34.5	35.1	58.8
	4	193	24.3	24.7	83.5
High priority	5	129	16.2	16.5	100.0
	.	14	1.8	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 781 Missing cases 14

A5E Physical, mental and social well-being

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	5	.6	.6	.6
	2	27	3.4	3.4	4.1
	3	179	22.5	22.9	26.9
	4	300	37.7	38.3	65.3
High priority	5	272	34.2	34.7	100.0
	.	12	1.5	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 783 Missing cases 12

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A5F An understanding of good citizenship

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	3	.4	.4	.4
	2	25	3.1	3.2	3.6
	3	182	22.9	23.6	27.2
	4	289	36.4	37.5	64.7
High priority	5	272	34.2	35.3	100.0
	.	24	3.0	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 771 Missing cases 24

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A5G Competence to respond to opportunities and expectations of the world of work

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	5	.6	.6	.6
	2	11	1.4	1.4	2.0
	3	114	14.3	14.6	16.6
	4	299	37.6	38.3	54.9
High priority	5	352	44.3	45.1	100.0
	.	14	1.8	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 781 Missing cases 14

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A5H Positive attitude toward lifelong learning

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Low priority	1	1	.1	.1	.1
	2	10	1.3	1.3	1.4
	3	69	8.7	8.8	10.2
	4	237	29.8	30.2	40.4
High priority	5	468	58.9	59.6	100.0
	.	10	1.3	Missing	
	Total	795	100.0	100.0	

Valid cases 785 Missing cases 10